Jan.15,1972

THE NEW YORKER

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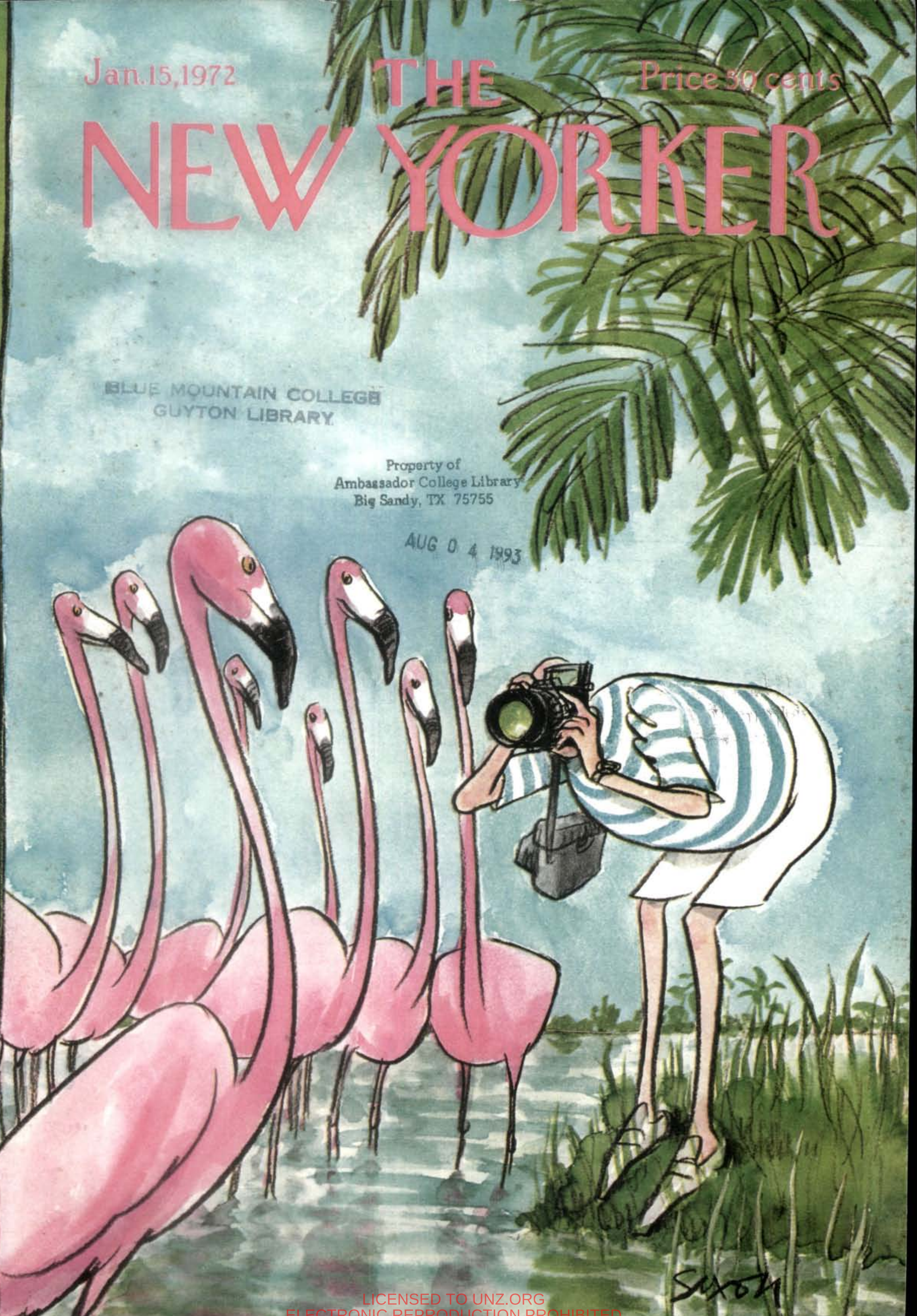

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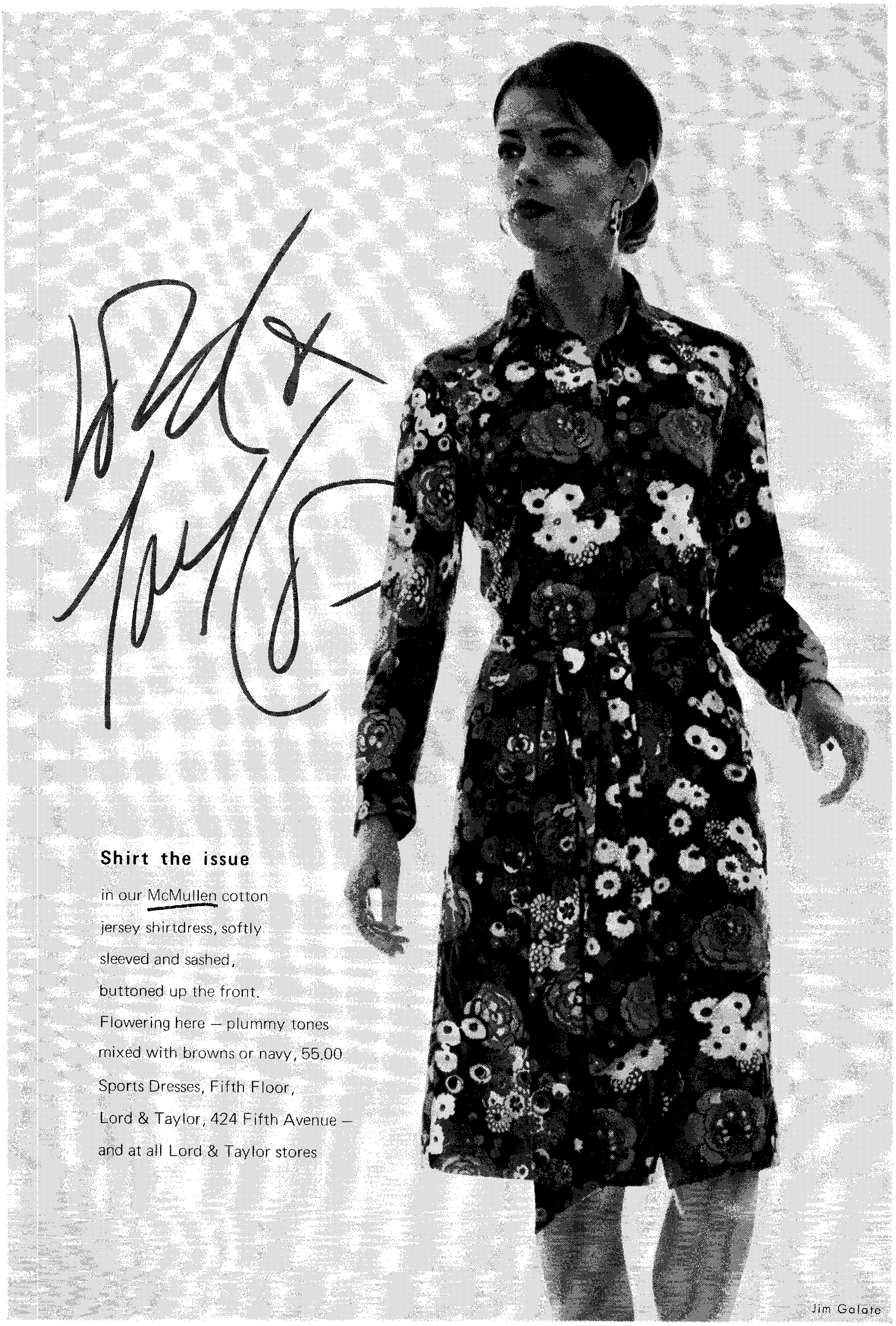

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22

THE THEATRE

(E. and W. mean East and West of Broadway.)

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Aint Supposed to Die a Natural Death—A great shout by Melvin Van Peebles, mingling social protest with the usual difficulties of people falling in and out of love. A musical with an all-black, all-wonderful cast. (Ambassador, 49th St., W. 265-1855. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel—This play by David Rabe, about the progress of a young soldier through training camp to combat (and death) in Vietnam, is a remarkable achievement indeed, and it is matched by Jeff Bleckner's direction. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Black Girl—J. E. Franklin's short, rich play, which is both poignant and funny, about a seventeen-year-old who, faced with many obstacles, manages to leave her bickering black family in Texas and go North to college. Kishasha gives a superior performance in the title role, and she receives strong support from, among others, Esther Rolle, Leonard Parker, and Louise Stubbs. Shauneille Perry directed. (Theatre de Lys, 121 Christopher St. WA 4-8782. Wednesday through Friday at 8:30; Saturday at 7 and 9; and Sunday at 7:30. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Jan. 16.)

The Black Terror—The hero of this very interesting play by Richard Wesley about a group of black revolutionaries is their chosen assassin, who argues in favor of strategy over zeal, and of life over death and martyrdom. A wonderful young actor named Kain makes his début in the role. Nathan George directed the lively production. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Godspell—A musical adaptation of the Book of Matthew, and once a numbing prologue is over, it becomes a joyful celebration of theatre itself. The troupe is young, refreshing, and versatile. Songs by Stephen Schwartz. (Promenade, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. 799-7690. Tuesdays through Fridays at 7:30; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Equity Library Theatre—Selected material from three revues—"One for the Money," "Two for the Show," and "Three to Make Ready"—by Nancy Hamilton and Morgan Lewis. Opens Thursday, Jan. 13, and will run through Sunday, Jan. 30. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Inner City—More of a minstrel show than its talented and energetic cast appears to have noticed. (Ethel Barrymore, 47th St., W. 246-0390. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Jesus Christ Superstar—A musical extravaganza with some pleasing songs and performers, adrift in a storm of Tom O'Horgan stage effects. (Mark Hellinger, 51st St., W. 757-7064. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

James Joyce Memorial Liquid Theatre—This import from Los Angeles is more calisthenic than dramatic, and considerable participation of one kind or another is expected from the audience. The show has nothing whatever to do with James Joyce. (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. 348-9254. Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 7:30, and Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 11.)

Lenny—Cliff Gorman as the late night-club comedian Lenny Bruce, surrounded by extraordinary visual and auditory metaphors of the society he reviled and longed to make over, and whose legal representatives helped to destroy him. Directed by Tom O'Horgan. (Brooks Atkinson, 47th St., W. 245-3430. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Love Me, Love My Children—This musical from Canada has a lively and stylish score by Robert Swerdlow, and it is performed with snap and sparkle by an especially engaging young company. The words, also by Mr. Swerdlow, are unobtrusive. (The theme is tribal youth again.) Setting by Jo Mielziner. (Mercer Street Theatre, 240 Mercer St., at 3rd St. 673-3937. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 7:30, and Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 10:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Nightride—A trashy melodrama about a homosexual middle-aged playwright. (Vandam, 15 Vandam St. 243-8900. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Old Times—The latest Pinter ghost story, full of scary silences. With Robert Shaw, Mary Ure, and Rosemary Harris. (Billy Rose, 41st St., W. 947-5510. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Only Fools Are Sad—An English-language version of an Israeli musical by Dan Almagor. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Wednesdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Prisoner of Second Avenue—Peter Falk and Lee Grant in Neil Simon's latest comedy, in which we are made to laugh all evening long at how miserable we are (and deserve to be) as resident New Yorkers. (Eugene O'Neill, 49th St., W. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

The Psychic Pretenders—An allegorical work, much of it mysterious and remote but with moments of humor and fun. The dancing of the all-black company is fascinating, as is the soft, compelling jazz that accompanies it. (New Lafayette, Seventh Ave. at 137th St. 862-2460. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:30, and Sundays at 7.)

Repertory Theatre of Lincoln Center—An extremely capable production of Edward Bond's NARROW ROAD TO THE DEEP NORTH, a thin little parable about good and evil. (Vivian Beaumont, 150 W. 65th St. 362-7616. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2.) . . . ¶ At the Forum, in the same building: Peter Handke's THE RIDE ACROSS LAKE CONSTANCE, translated by Michael Roloff. Preview Wednesday, Jan. 12. Opens officially on Thursday, Jan. 13, at 7:30, and will run through Saturday, Jan. 29. (Tuesdays

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2.)

Rosebloom—A tedious, symbol-laden play about a family of Jewish *stereotypes. It is occasion*ally enlivened by a sprinkling of funny lines, and by the performance of Regina Baff. (Eastside, 334 E. 74th St. 861-2288. Tuesdays through Fridays at 7:30; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Sticks and Bones—David Rabe, author of "Pavlo Hummel," has pulled off the impressive feat of writing a highly stylized comedy about the suffering of a young veteran of Vietnam and his family. The acting, under Jeff Bleckner's direction, is all that any playwright could wish for. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

There's One in Every Marriage—Georges Feydeau's account of naughty goings on in Paris at the turn of the century. Presented by the *Stratford National Theatre of Canada. (Roy*ale, 45th St., W. 245-5760. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

To Live Another Summer—Surely this was put together by the Chamber of Commerce of Tel Aviv? Enough yet. (Lunt-Fontanne, 46th St., W. 586-5555. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Twigs—Four loosely linked playlets about married life. Sada Thompson plays four women, to surprisingly witty effect, and is surrounded by an exceptionally good cast. The author is George Furth. (Plymouth, 45th St., W. 246-9156. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Two Gentlemen of Verona—A musical by John Guare, Galt MacDermot, and Mel Shapiro, directed by Mr. Shapiro, in which the Bard receives an amusing roughing-up at the hands of some remarkably attractive actors. (St. James, 44th St., W. 695-5858. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Vivat! Vivat Regina!—Claire Bloom and Eileen Atkins in Robert Bolt's play, imported from London. The director is Peter Dews. Previews *Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 18-19.* Opens officially on Thursday, Jan. 20. (Broadhurst, 44th St., W. 246-6699. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:45. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

The Wedding of Iphigenia plus Iphigenia in Concert—This musical adaptation doesn't do much for the Euripides originals ("Iph. in Aulis" and "Iph. in Tauris"), but there is charm here as well as foolishness, and Peter Link's rock score is a pleasure. The performances are fine, too. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 8.)

Long Runs—**APPLAUSE:** Anne Baxter, Janice Lynde, and Brandon Maggart in a rip-roaring musical version of the movie "All About Eve." *(Palace, Broadway at 47th St.* 757-2626. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)... **BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE:** Gloria Swanson, David Huffman, and Pamella Bellwood are now in this little comedy that may make you laugh in spite of yourself. (Booth, 45th St., W. 246-5969. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)... **THE EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN-IN-THE-MOON MARIGOLDS:** What matters most in this domestic drama is the character of its wisecracking, scornful, and very touching heroine—the down-at-heels mother of two cowed daughters. (New Theatre, 154 E. 54th St. 752-0440. Tuesdays through Fridays at 7:30; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)... **FOLLIES:** An ambitious attempt to tell some home truths, marred by a pedestrian book. Several very good songs by Stephen Sondheim and, as usual, a superlative production by Harold Prince. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 245-4878. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **JACQUES BREL IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN PARIS:** 1,653 performances so far. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 982-5020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 7:30; Saturdays at 7; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)... **THE FANTASTICKS:** 4,871 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 7:30; Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)... **FIDDLER ON THE ROOF:** 3,049 performances so far. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 247-7992. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2:30.)... **HAIR:** 1,557 performances so far. (Biltmore, 47th St., W. 582-5340. Nightly, except Mondays, at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)... **NO, NO, NANETTE:** A revival of the Youmans musical of 1925, with Ruby Keeler, Bobby Van, and Helen Gallagher, and with sets and costumes by Raoul Pène du Bois. Burt Shevelove directed. (46th Street Theatre, 46th St., W. 246-4271. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)... **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Belasco, 44th St., E. 586-7950. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)... **ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST:** Dale Wasserman's hack adaptation of Ken Kesey's novel set in an insane asylum. (Mercer Street Theatre, 240 Mercer St., at 3rd St. 673-3937. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 7:30, and Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 10:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)... **THE PROPOSITION:** An improvised revue with six good-humored young players from Boston. It is all pretty amateurish, but Jane Curtin, Judy Kahan, and Paul Kreppel provide a few bright spots of mimicry, and Danny Troob provides an en*chanting musical accompaniment at the piano.* (Mercer Street Theatre, 240 Mercer St., at 3rd St. 673-3937. Thursdays at 7:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 and 10:30; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)... **1776:** A musical about the laborious debates of the Continental Congress. (Majestic, 44th St., W. 246-0730. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **SLEUTH:** A witty games-playing mystery by Anthony Shaffer about games-playing, with Paul Rogers and Keith Baxter. (Music Box, 45th St., W. 246-4636. Nightly, except Sundays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

BALLET AND DANCE PROGRAMS

New York City Ballet—Tentative schedule—Wednesday, Jan. 12, at 8: "Serenade," "Octandre," "Tarantella," and "Raymonda Variations."... ¶ Thursday, Jan. 13, at 8: "Raymonda Variations," "Chopiniana" (première), "Printemps" (première), and "La Valse."... ¶ Friday, Jan. 14, at 8: "Bugaku," "Donizetti Variations," "Valse-Fantaisie," and "Symphony in C."... ¶ Saturday, Jan. 15, at 2: "Serenade," "Who Cares?," and "PAMTGG."... ¶ Saturday, Jan. 15, at 8: "Printemps" and "Dances at a Gathering." ... ¶ Sunday, Jan. 16, at 1: "In the Night," Momentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "The Concert," and "Stars and Stripes."... ¶ Sunday, Jan. 16, at 7: "Bugaku," "The Cage," and "Symphony in C."... ¶ Tuesday, Jan. 18, at 8: "Jewels." ... ¶ Wednesday, Jan. 19, at 8: "Raymonda Variations," "Dim Lustre," "In the Night," and "PAMTGG."... ¶ Thursday, Jan. 20, at 8: "Momentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Watermill" (première), and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 2."... ¶ Friday, Jan. 21, at 8: "Concerto Barocco," "Dim Lustre," "In the Night," and "Ray*monda Variations."... ¶ Saturday, Jan. 22, at* 2: "Raymonda Variations," "The Cage," "Allegro Brilliante," and "PAMTGG."... ¶ Saturday, Jan. 22, at 8: "Raymonda Variations," "Watermill," "Tarantella," and "La Valse." (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. TR 7-4727. Through Sunday, Feb. 20.)

American Ballet Theatre—Wednesday evening, Jan. 12: "Brahms Quintet," "A Soldier's Tale," "Don Quixote Pas de Deux," and "Gaieté Parisienne."... ¶ Thursday evening, Jan. 13: "Pulcinella Variations," and "La Fille Mal Gardée."... ¶ Friday evening, Jan. 14: "Theatre" and "La Fille Mal Gardée."... ¶ Saturday matinée, Jan. 15: "Les Sylphides," "Theatre," and "Theme and Variations."... ¶ Saturday evening, Jan. 15: "Theme and Variations," "A Soldier's Tale," "Don Quixote Pas de Deux," and "Gaieté Parisienne."... ¶ Sunday evening, Jan. 16: "Pulcinella Variations" and "La Fille Mal Gardée."... ¶ Sunday evening, Jan. 16: "Theatre" and "La Fille Mal Gardée."... ¶ Tuesday evening, Jan. 18: "Les Patineurs," "Eccentrique" (première), and "Gaîté Parisienne."... ¶ Wednesday evening, Jan. 19: "Coppélia."... ¶ Thursday evening, Jan. 20: "Eccentrique," "At Midnight," "Jardin aux Lilas," and "Rodeo."... ¶ Friday evening, Jan. 21: "Pulcinella Variations," "Jardin aux Lilas," "Dark Elegies," and "Les Patineurs."... ¶ Saturday matinée, Jan. 22: "Pulcinella Variations" and "La Fille Mal Gardée."... ¶ Saturday evening, Jan. 22: "Paquita," "Miss Julie," and "The River." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2. Through Sunday, Jan. 30.)

Murray Louis Dance Company and Alwin Nikolais Dance Theatre—Opening performances of a joint two-week engagement that will run through Sunday, Jan. 30—Tuesday, Jan. 18, at 7:30: "Sanctum," "Facets," "Boulevard from Imago," "Intersection," and "Scenario."... ¶ Wednesday, Jan. 19, at 8: "Calligraph for Martyrs," "Noumenon from Masks, Props & Mobiles," "Personnae," and "Tent."... ¶ Thursday, Jan. 20, at 8: "Personnae," "Continuum," and "Calligraph for Martyrs."... ¶ Friday, Jan. 21, at 8: "Chimera," "Tent," and "Proximities."... ¶ Saturday, Jan. 22, at 8: "Sanctum," "Personnae," "Interims," and "Foreplay" (première). (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. ST 3-2434.)

MISCELLANY

Ice Show—"Ice Capades," with a company headed by Tim Wood, Linda Carbonetto, Tommy Litz, and Anna Galmarini. (Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Tuesdays through Fridays at 7:30; Saturdays at 11, 3, and 8:30; and Sundays at 1:30 and 5:30. Extra matinée Wednesday, Jan. 19, at 2. Closes Sunday, Jan. 23.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing of places around town where you might pass a pleasant hour or two.)

MOSTLY FOR MUSIC

(No dancing and no formal dining, either, unless indicated.)

Bitter End, 147 Bleecker St. (475-7804)—Dig that Bill Withers, a newcomer who composes, sings, and plays guitar with all kinds of promising qualities. He will be here through Sunday, Jan. 16. On Thursday, Jan. 20, Genya Ravan, a vital young singer who recently split with Ten Wheel Drive, will move in with her new group. Coffee and tea are available. Tuesdays are reserved for visiting performers. Closed Monday, Jan. 17, and Wednesday, Jan. 19.

Boomer's, 340 Bleecker St., at Christopher St. (243-0245)—Jazz, soul food, red tablecloths—a formula that works well these days. Music from nine-thirty to three. A jam session is held each Monday from eight to twelve.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl. (228-6440)—A wood-panelled bar and restaurant where people come for a cocktail and, sometimes, stay the evening. The music is quietly lively, and it runs from nine-thirty to one-thirty. Through Saturday, Jan. 15, Ralph Towner will alternate between guitar and piano while Glen Moore handles a bass. Mondays, author-pianist Frank Conroy and a bass player substitute for the regulars. Dinner. Closed Sundays.

Cellar, 70 W. 95th St. (866-1200)—A polished, comfortable restaurant whose only anomaly is the acoustics: loud and clear in the bar but faint and obscure in the dining area. Tuesdays through Saturdays, bassist Earl May leads a quartet in some inventive if standard jazz. Sundays, guitarist Gene Bertoncini and a bass violist perform. Mondays, bassist Larry Willis teams up with a pianist. Music from ten to four.

Cookery, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (OR 4-4450)—Luckily for everybody, Marian McPartland's Apollonian piano is at the center of this cheerful, casual-dining establishment. She produces wonders of jazz with what appears to be the greatest of ease six nights a week from eight until one. Rick Petrone assists her on bass. Sundays, from seven to midnight, Cyril Haynes takes over the piano.

Gaslight, 152 Bleecker St. (674-2580)—Brick walls, wooden benches, coffee, tea, and cider. Starting Wednesday, Jan. 19, high-voiced Al Kooper will be singing at the keyboard, a double task that he does either impressively or inflatedly, depending on your viewpoint. Singer Michael Gately will be on the same bill. Music nightly, but Tuesdays are given over to visiting entertainers.

Guitar, 753 Tenth Ave., at 51st St. (265-9334)—Home (and a sweet one) for the six-stringed instrument. Through Sunday, Jan. 16, Harry Leahy will be on guitar and Ron Nespo on bass. The Carl Thompson duo starts Wednesday, Jan. 19. Music Wednesdays through Sundays, from nine-thirty until two-thirty. Soul food.

Half Note, 289 Hudson St., at Spring St. (AL 5-9752)—Tenor man Zoot Sims is again leading a quartet, this time with nimble-handed Roy Haynes on drums. On Fridays and Saturdays, blues singer Jimmy Rushing joins in. Mondays, Clark Terry's seventeen-piece band has the stage to itself. Light Italian dishes are served.

Jacques, 168 Bleecker St., at Sullivan St. (254-5920)—Pianist Eddie Thompson and bassist Lyn Christie are collaborating in this bar whose chief virtue (other than the music) is its freshly popped popcorn. They play Fridays and Saturdays. Mr. Thompson plays alone Sundays and Tuesdays through Thursdays. On Mondays, another competent pianist, Lance Hayward, fills in. Nine until closing.

Jimmy Ryan's, 154 W. 54th St. (CO 5-9505)—No musical revolution here, and no sartorial one either, but traditionalists can hear some healthy Dixieland turned out by a group that includes Roy Eldridge, Bobby Pratt, Joe Muranyi, Chuck Folds, and Eddie Locke. Closed Sundays.

Peewee's, 202 Ave. A, at 12th St. (473-9596)—A dim, funky bar that is run by, for, and because of the people, who are responding by filling the house. The house isn't much to look at, but the jazz is potent and often technically complex. Thursdays, from eight until two-thirty, Nina Sheldon sits at the piano and sings. Fridays through Sundays, Jan. 14-16 and 21-23, Eddie Jordan leads a quartet that includes three guitarists and a drummer. Sunday afternoons, from four to eight, the scene switches to folk. Soul-food dinners. Music from nine until closing. N.B.: Not for beginners.

Rafiki, 170 Ave. A, at 11th St. (674-9522)—Musically provocative and gastronomically soulful. Bassist Juni Booth leads a combo Thursday through Sunday, Jan. 13-16. Music from nine-thirty until two.

Red Garter, 15 W. 4th St., which is *east* of Washington Square. (982-4270)—A banjo band smiles and makes music from the back of an old fire engine. Beer and peanuts. Polar bears and occasional old flicks. Closed Mondays.

Slugs', 242 E. 3rd St. (677-9727)—Larry Coryell, a dexterous and very versatile, if sometimes puzzling guitarist, leads his fivesome through Sunday, Jan. 16. On Tuesday, Jan. 18, the Coryell group will give way to Gato Barbieri, a tenor saxophonist with a New Jazz, Third World orientation. He will be in charge of a quintet. The room is a bit tired around the edges, and so is the neighborhood, but the sound draws a crowd. Closed Mondays.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (GR 5-5120)—Pianist Ahmad Jamal, who is apt to get fancy, heads his trio every night but Monday, when new talent is auditioned. On Tuesdays, a trio led by Daphne Hellman, whose harp sings, takes turns with the regulars. Limited dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (989-9011)—To start off the election year, Dizzy Gillespie, who once almost ran for President (in 1964, in California), is leading his quintet in this wedge-shaped cellar. Diz, a virtuoso trumpeter and a jazz giant, will remain through Sunday, Jan. 16. On Tuesday, Jan. 18, pianist McCoy Tyner will bring in a quartet. Mondays are reserved for the mighty seventeen-piece Thad Jones-Mel Lewis band. Music begins at nine-thirty, in theory.

West Boondock, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (924-9723)—Conversational evenings, amicable nights, and cooking typified by collard greens and black-eyed peas. Piano and bass are the instruments: Nat Jones and Herbie Lewis play Mondays through Wednesdays, and Lance Hayward and Carl Pruitt play Thursdays through Sundays. Music from eight. A glow inside, dark streets outside.

Your Father's Mustache, Seventh Ave. S. at 10th St. (675-4630)—Balaban & Cats, a six-man outfit, produces some lively Dixieland every Sunday from six-thirty to eleven. On Sunday, Jan. 16, Gene Krupa will sit in on drums. The other nights of the week, this anachronous place offers a banjo band and some trumped-up nostalgia.

DISCOTHÈQUES AND SUCH

C'Est Moi, 1220 Second Ave., at 64th St. (935-1416)—Underneath the arches, I will keep a rendezvous with you, etc. Downstairs is a restaurant named Sam's. The upstairs arched room is open for dancing to discs from nine until three-thirty every night.

L'Etoile, 1 E. 59th St. (751-7025)—Urbanity is the mood: glass, metal, and carpeting help create it. Dinner and supper are presided over by an experienced chef. Dancing, to recorded music, on Saturdays only, from eleven to three.

Grape, 200 E. 60th St. (752-0980)—The old Yellowfingers has reopened in purple splendor, the motif being the fruit of the vine, along with cheese and things. The sound system is as good as ever, as are the drinks. Dancing from three on Sundays, from five other days. Closed Mondays.

Hippopotamus, 154 E. 54th St. (486-1566)—One of those ego-gratifying pleasure domes, where you are supposed to feel glad they let you in. The décor is British-in-India. Dancing to records from nine-thirty. An ample menu every night but Sunday, when only couscous is served. Reservations are required for dining.

Nico's, in the Hotel Delmonico, Park Ave. at 59th St. (355-2500)—An outfit called Rhythm plays, and a girl named Suzanne sings. When they aren't on the stand, records spin. Supper. Music from nine to two every night but Sunday.

Shepheard's, in the Drake Hotel, Park Ave. at 56th St. (HA 1-0900)—Little Egypt. People dance in this sphinx-filled restaurant to an assortment of records, some fast, some slow. Three times a night, live entertainers do pop songs with all the restraint of a team of vacuum-cleaner salesmen: through Saturday, Jan. 15, Bourbon 'n Spice; beginning Monday, Jan. 17, the Gentlemen and Their Lady.

Thursday's 24, 57 W. 58th St. (371-7777)—Round-the-clock action is the idea, but this insomniac principle is operative only on Fridays and Saturdays, when the doors stay open all day and all night. There are two restaurant floors, two bars, and a dance floor situated on a kind of floating mezzanine. Dancing to tapes. A fairly full menu.

Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—By gum and oh wow, the good old times are often used as backdrops for the good new times, which may explain why hot pants can be seen shaking beneath Tiffany-type lamps. Upstairs is for fancy hamburgers and such. Downstairs is for dancing to records from eight until three.

BIG DEALS

(Dinner and supper, music, and all that.)

Alpine Cellar, in the Hotel McAlpin, Broadway at 34th St. (PE 6-5700)—A bit of the Corn Belt, but a bit of the Rhine Belt, too (*schuhplattler* dancers and a sort of brass band), and the two get along famously and cacophonously. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Château Madrid, Lexington Ave. at 48th St. (752-8080)—Spanish cats with nine lives and the ability always to land on their feet. The current troupe is Marcelo and his Spanish Ballet. Roberto Ledesma, orotund and Latin-American, is the resident tenor; on Thursday, Jan. 13, he will be replaced by Cuban singer Louisa Maria Guel. Closed Sundays. . . . ¶ In the **FLAMENCO ROOM**, there is activity, well along in the evening, by vocal and physical athletes who are Madrileños in every respect, performing in a casually formless format until early morn. No Sundays.

Copacabana, 10 E. 60th St. (758-0900)—Wednesday, Jan. 19, will be the final night for rhythm-and-blues singer Phil Flowers and comic Lee Allen. Pop singer Dick Jensen and his entourage arrive one night later. No silent nights. . . . ¶ In the ground-floor lounge, one can still evoke the illusion that he is in typical, tropical, topical Las Vegas surroundings. The music, just voice and piano, begins at ten. No quiet nights here, either.

Pierre, Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (838-8000)—**LA FORÊT**, where every prospect pleases, remains serene even when a set of Peter Duchin undergraduates suddenly go Dixie on the bandstand, for no harm can come within this magic circle—a French magic circle, all the way from chef to sommelier. Eight-thirty until two-thirty, but, alas, only on a five-day week—Tuesday through Saturday. . . . ¶ Phil Wayne, who carried off the prize for the best dance music of the past season, spends Sundays and Mondays in the **CAFÉ** with a smaller crew (just three), seven-thirty until quite late; Herb Winner's triad is on duty all the other nights.

Plaza, Fifth Ave. at 59th St. (PL 9-3000)—In the **PERSIAN ROOM**, Régine, the French soprano, appears at ten during the week, at nine and eleven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Burt Farber and Mark Monte are on the bandstand, heading up their crews. Closed Sundays. . . . ¶ In the **GREEN TULIP**, a brace of new characters, Sig and Gary, who are strolling musicians, disport themselves from dinner through supper, but only for dinner on Sundays. . . . ¶ In **PLAZA 9** (PL 9-3933) are thirteen new young people in a sort of revue whose music is carry-me-back-to-the-nineteen-twenties; this is done at eight and eleven every night but Monday. . . . ¶ In the **PALM COURT** at night (except Sundays), a pair of old family retainers (Ernest Schoen and Jules Kuti) commune on fiddle and piano; Sandu Marcu, a violin man of long standing, is still on hand from four-thirty until seven-thirty.

Rainbow Grill, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (PL 7-8970)—The sumptuous mountain fastness is presenting the songs of João Gilberto together with Stan Getz's fivesome. Closed Sundays.

St. Regis-Sheraton, Fifth Ave. at 55th St. (PL 3-4500)—The **MAISONETTE** reopens on Monday, Jan. 17, as a showplace for Count Basie's band. Dinner and supper sets for the band, and in between times, George Cort's orchestra will provide the dance music. Closed Sundays. . . . **LA BOITE**, the prepossessing little chamber across the way, is exactly the setting for the chamber music that issues from the

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violin plied by that midtown landmark Gunnar Hansen. A better man for the job would be hard to find. Closed Sundays. . . . ¶ And what a fine idea to pair guitarists as puissant as George Barnes and Bucky Pizzarelli, then to station them, at half past nine every evening but Sunday and Monday, in the minute **ST. REGIS ROOM**! *No dining, no dancing, but who needs it here?*

SMALL AND BOUNCY

(Dining but no dancing, except as indicated.)

CAFÉ CARLYLE, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (RH 4-1600): A change of pace for this club—five Spanish singers and instrumentalists known as Los Valldemosa are making their metropolitan bow. Music from ten until three. Closed Sundays and Mondays. . . . **DANGERFIELD'S,** 1118 First Ave., at 61st St. (593-1650): Less tongue in cheek and more tongue *and* cheek is Rodney Dangerfield, the narrator here; whichever, the conversation is both brusque and bright. Steaks and what goes with them. Closed Sundays. . . . **DIONYSOS,** 304 E. 48th St. (758-8240): The *son-et-lumière* festival that brings the Acropolis to life every night is easily matched right in this spot. Eat, dance (sometimes to rock), and be merry from nine until very, very late, and admire the scenery. Closed Sundays. . . . **ADONIS,** 1230 Second Ave., at 64th St. (249-2773): More Greek Games, more Aegean scenery, more song, dance, and bouzouki—and thereby more fun, from eight-thirty until four, though (in the Greek fashion) never on Sunday. . . . **AL MOUNIA,** in the Hotel Lancaster, Madison Ave. at 38th St. (683-5860): One of the seven wonders of the Moroccan world, and something to be seen by everyone at least once—thus, a great place to start restaging the Arabian Nights. There's piano in one corner from six until whenever (after nine-thirty, it's by Jacques Kayal, a French-singing, non-Bogart Casablancan). Closed Sundays. . . . **CHEZ VITO,** 36 E. 60th St. (PL 5-2025): Sort of a New World *café chantant*, what with Leyna Gabriele and her chorus singing away from a midway table and a set of fiddlers in almost constant motion. Closed Sundays. . . . **A QUIET LITTLE TABLE IN THE CORNER,** belowdecks in the Executive Hotel, 237 Madison Ave., at 37th St. (685-7160): A bumper-to-bumper traffic jam that bothers none of the guests, who have no intention of moving on. Bubber Johnson plays piano from nine-thirty until three Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . **MYKONOS,** 349 W. 46th St. (265-1590): Greek meets Greek in an inn on the well-known island, dines *à la grecque*, and nods with the beat of an agile Athenian trio. All quite jovial, and every night but Sunday. . . . **LA CHANSONNETTE,** 890 Second Ave., at 47th St. (PL 2-7320): *En famille* with Rita Dimitri, a fine figure of a soubrette who, surveying her small domain from the top of a piano, sings, or talks-sings, during dinner and supper, in a manner distinctly not women's lib. Dancing, too, in this neat pocket park. Closed Sundays and Mondays. . . . **ASTI,** 13 E. 12th St. (AL 5-9773): Anyone—be he waiter, busboy, or barkeep—who can carry a tray is required to carry a tune in this not especially disguised or especially sedate school of the opera. Closed Mondays. . . . **IMPROVISATION,** 358 W. 44th St. (765-8268): One guess is as good as another about which newcomers will try out on a given night. One guest is *not* as good as another, but some of these neophytes have something to say, or sing, for themselves, so patience can be rewarded. Minimum internal nourishment. No Sundays. . . . **UPSTAIRS AT THE DOWNSTAIRS,** 37 W. 56th St. (JU 2-1244): Mort Sahl, who regards the world as his defective oyster, is presently on the soap box; there are also songs by Kelly Garrett. Closed Sundays.

SMALL AND SERENE

(Dining, but no dancing.)

IPERBOLE, 137 E. 55th St. (759-9720): In the well-ordered Roman way of life, dining becomes a career instead of a wee pause for refreshments. The setting is circa 1975, but the music (the voice and guitar of Dino Palermo, a genuine exponent of *la dolce vita*) belongs to a fine Old World. Seven until one. Closed Sundays. . . . ¶ Belowstairs, in an equally ornamented, compartmented grotto, dance music flows from a dulcet threesome, seven-thirty to one-thirty, though not on Sundays. . . . **CHÂTEAU HENRI IV,** 37 E. 64th St. (RE 7-8818): No difficulty about living like kings, for the appurtenances—moat, armor, medieval architecture—were left behind intact when Henri IV moved into a modern co-op. The travelling violin plied by George Cardini *and the retrospective piano plied* by Herman Arminski are in service Tuesdays through Saturdays. Another pianist fills in on Mondays; no music Sundays. The restaurant is pastoral; the bar can be rambunctious. . . . **REMBRANDT ROOM,** in the Stanhope Hotel, Fifth Ave. at 81st St. (BU 8-5800): As handsome as a townhouse can possibly be, and as formal, too. George Feyer, last of the Hapsburgs, gives his piano (and occasional lyrics) the flavor that has always been a secret ingredient of Vienna. No sound on Sundays and Mondays. . . . **SHERRY-NETHERLAND,** Fifth Ave. at 59th St. (EL 5-2800): A proper perspective on life after dark is afforded by the bar-and-grill, where one's prandial career is ad-lib and at-leisure. Every night except Sunday *and Monday, Tony Gorody plays good,* worldly piano from around six until as late as necessary. . . . **THE GRIFFIN,** 313 E. 46th St. (371-4542): The dinner piano (seven-thirty to eleven) is the work of Ray Onley, and it is such a quiet searching out of the possibilities in today's American music that one is tempted to stay on and on in this pleasurable and polite refectory. Closed Sundays. . . . **MONSIGNORE,** 61 E. 55th St. (EL 5-2070): Invasions of privacy are not unheard of, for a troupe of serenaders can pop up beside one's butter plate on short notice, or none at all, and until fairly late at night. Well, when in Rome . . . Closed Sundays. . . . **LA BIBLIOTHÈQUE,** 341 E. 43rd St. (689-5445): A hill town (pop. 70) at the very cul-de-sac end of the street, *high above First Avenue, wherefore* the view is as good as the ambience and the ease. Norman Rollings, voice-over-piano, sits midway between bar and restaurant from eight until one Mondays through Thursdays, from nine until two Fridays and Saturdays. . . . **LA BIBLIOTHÈQUE VERTE,** 308 E. 59th St. (832-3814): It's run by the same librarians, and it looks more outdoors than bookworm. It sounds that way, too, when Jerry Scott applies easy voice and piano to songs that don't often come our way. His work week: from nine until two through the week, ten to three Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Sundays. . . . **SIGN OF THE DOVE,** 1110 Third Ave., at 65th St. (UN 1-8080): Lynn Mullinax, a country cousin from down South, gives the piano in the bar an air of being very well educated and extremely good-natured. He is in session from six until one, though not on Mondays. . . . **DRAKE ROOM,** 71 E. 56th St. (HA 1-0900): The old standby. From cocktails until after-the-theatre supper, there is piano by Dick Hankinson, who cedes the instrument to other hands on Sundays. . . . **BARCLAY HOTEL,** 111 E. 48th St. (PL 5-5900): A brace of Lester Lanin's boys go plink-plink on the Barclay Terrace during the cocktail session in the King's Inn from seven to nine, and in the Gold Room from nine to eleven. Monday through Friday is the extent of this pleasant idea. . . . **JOHNNY ANGEL'S,** *232* E. 58th St. (758-5665): In remembrance of Goldie's New York, one of the city's best playgrounds, Wayne Sanders (long a part of that enterprise) does piano, nine to two, *in a spot rather* reminiscent of the original. Closed Sundays. . . . **JACK DELANEY,** 72 Grove St. (AL 5-7905): Like Johnny Angel's (*vide supra*), a recollection of the disused supper clubs whose piano men set a mood that kept one ear alert for conversation and the other alert for the music. The practitioners in the extremely matter-of-fact Village grill are Charles De Forest (Monday and Tuesday) and Murray Grand (the rest of the nights). Eight to two.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open weekdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES

LENNART ANDERSON—Drawings, some related to this artist's realistic paintings of street scenes and interiors; through Jan. 29. (Graham, second floor, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. Closed Mondays.)

MILTON AVERY (1893-1965)—Oils on paper, watercolors, and monotypes by this influential painter of nature; through Jan. 27. (Borgenicht, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. Closed Mondays.)

SAUL BAIZERMAN (1889-1957)—Twelve hammered-copper sculptures by this leading American figurative artist; through Feb. 5. (Zabriskie, 29 W. 57th St. Closed Mondays.)

JENNIFER BARTLETT AND TERRY FOX—Dots on enamelled-steel plates, singly or in groups, by the former, and photos and drawings dealing with hospitals and operations by the latter; through Jan. 29. (Palley, 93 Prince St. Closed Mondays.)

MAX BECKMANN (1884-1950)—Paintings, drawings, *and graphics; through* Thursday, Jan. 20. (Sabarsky, 987 Madison Ave., at 77th St. Closed Mondays.)

RONALD BLADEN—One large work by a well-known Minimalist; through Jan. 27. (Fischbach, 29 W. 57th St. Closed Mondays.)

STANLEY BOXER—Abstract paintings suggestive of sea and sky; through Thursday, Jan. 20. (De Nagy, 29 W. 57th St. Closed Mondays.)

COLLEEN BROWNING—Paintings of nature with overtones of fantasy; through Saturday, Jan. 22. (Kennedy, 20 E. 56th St. Closed Mondays.)

PAUL CAMACHO—Painted variations on circles and rectangles; through Jan. 29. (Zierler, 956 Madison Ave., at 75th St. Closed Mondays.)

EDITH CARLSON—Paintings in a rectangular format that gain their effects through relations of color; through Jan. 29. (Alonzo, 26 E. 63rd St. Closed Mondays.)

REX CLAWSON—Paintings and drawings with a leaning toward social comment; through Jan. 29. (ACA, 25 E. 73rd St.)

PIERRE DAQUIN—Expressive abstractions in tapestry; through Friday, Jan. 21. (Arras, 979 Third Ave., at 59th St. Closed Saturdays.)

ROY DE FOREST—Fanciful paintings with a recurrent image of a workhorse; through Feb. 3. (Frumkin, 41 E. 57th St.)

DON EDDY—Photo-realistic paintings of automobiles in parking lots, wrecking lots, or on isolated streets; first one-man show here by this California artist. Through Thursday, Jan. 20. (French & Co., 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

JOHN FERREN (1906-70)—Paintings from 1937 to 1969, covering several styles of this abstract colorist; starting Saturday, Jan. 15. (Sachs, 29 W. 57th St. Closed Mondays.)

MAURICE FREEDMAN—Semi-abstract landscapes and seascapes; through Saturday, Jan. 15. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

NOBU FUKUI—Emblematic paintings consisting of semi-geometric forms; through Feb. 2. (Hutchinson, 127 Greene St., at W. Houston St. Closed Mondays.)

SAM GELBER—Realistic paintings of Maine orchards; through Jan. 30. (Green Mountain, 17 Perry St. Daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.)

HERBERT GEORGE—Sculptures of polished, machined metal and sections of shaped soft leather, enclosed in six-foot Plexiglas tubes; starting Saturday, Jan. 15. (Danenberg Contemporaries, 1000 Madison Ave., at 78th St. Closed Mondays.)

Christos Gianakos—Cast sculptures in colored polyester; first one-man show here. Starts Saturday, Jan. 15. (Hundred Acres, 456 West Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

Cleve Gray—Abstract paintings with Hawaiian themes, plus cast-bronze sculptures; through Jan. 29. (Parsons, 24 W. 57th St. Closed Mondays.)

Martin Johnson Heade (1819-1904)—Luminist landscapes and flowers by a nineteenth-century itinerant American; through Jan. 29. (Peridot-Washburn, 820 Madison Ave., at 68th St. Closed Mondays.)

Hans Hofmann (1880-1966)—Eight or ten oil paintings of the late period; through Jan. 26. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Closed Mondays.)

Nicholas Krushenick and Larry Bell—New paintings and collages by the former and Plexiglas boxes by the latter; through Feb. 2. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St. Closed Mondays.)

Joseph Kurhajec—Sculptures of scaly or hair-covered birdlike creatures, also collages, drawings, and prints; through Feb. 5. (Dorsky, 111 Fourth Ave., at 11th St.)

Rodger Mack—Abstract bronze and nickel-bronze sculptures; through Saturday, Jan. 22. (Krasner, 1061 Madison Ave., at 81st St. Closed Mondays.)

Paul Manship (1885-1966)—Works in marble, bronze, and plaster from all periods in the career of this academic realist; through Jan. 27. (Schoelkopf, 825 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Matta—Paintings by the Chilean Surrealist who works in Paris; through Jan. 29. (Iolas, 15 E. 55th St. Closed Mondays.)

Harry Nadler—Cutouts of colored papers on white backgrounds; through Jan. 27. (Bertha Schaefer, 41 E. 57th St.)

Ray Parker—A selection covering three years of painting by this abstract colorist; through Jan. 24. (Visual Arts, 209 E. 23rd St. Mondays through Thursdays, 10 to 9; Fridays, 10 to 4.)

Reinhoud—Metal sculptures of gnomelike figures; through Feb. 5. (Lefebre, 47 E. 77th St. Closed Mondays.)

David Roth—Arrangements of painted strings according to a mathematical scheme; first one-man show in New York. Through Feb. 4. (Elkon, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St. Closed Mondays.)

Ludwig Sander—Recent compositions by this meticulous hard-edge painter; through Feb. 2. (Rubin, 49 W. 57th St. Closed Mondays.)

Ed Schlinski—Papier-mâché sculptures with a social message; through Jan. 29. (Lerner-Misrachi, 789 Madison Ave., at 67th St. Closed Mondays.)

Jo Anne Schneider—Paintings of paper bags and cardboard boxes; through Jan. 29. (Rehn, 655 Madison Ave., at 60th St.)

Jason Schoener—Semi-abstract landscapes of Latin America; starting Tuesday, Jan. 18. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

Kenneth Snelson—New structures of wood, bamboo, metal, and rope by an artist known for his steel-tension sculptures; through Feb. 2. (Weber, 420 West Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

Joseph Solman—Figurative monotypes and drawings, also landscapes and still-lifes; starting Saturday, Jan. 15. (Feist, 1125 Madison Ave., at 84th St.)

Michael Steiner—A joint exhibition of abstract metal sculptures: large works at the Marlborough (41 E. 57th St.) and small pieces at the Goldowsky (1078 Madison Ave., at 81st St.); both through Jan. 29. (Both galleries are closed Mondays.)

Dianne Nelson Tullis—Still-lifes, interiors, and portraits in collage; through Saturday, Jan. 15. (Graham, third floor, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Cy Twombly—Linear activities on gray, white, or black backgrounds; starting Saturday, Jan. 15. (Castelli, 4 E. 77th St. Closed Mondays.)

Victor Vasarely—Flat geometrical wall pieces in colored plastic; starting Tuesday, Jan. 18. (Gimpel, 1040 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Group Shows—At **CORDIER & EKSTROM**, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.: Sculptures and paintings of mythological and fabulous creatures, from sixth-century Etruscan to the present; through Feb. 12. (Closed Mondays.)... **DANENBERG**, 1020 Madison Ave., at 79th St.: American artists, among them Benton, Archipenko, Marsh, Max Weber, and Zorach; through Feb. 5. (Closed Mondays.)... **GORDON**, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.: An educational exhibit dealing with various aspects of printmaking, using examples going back to the fifteenth century; through Saturday, Jan. 15. ... **HUTTON**, 967 Madison Ave., at 75th St.: More than a hundred Russian avant-garde paintings, sculptures, and constructions from 1908 to 1922 by Goncharova, Larionov, Lissitzky, Malevich, Popova, Rodchenko, Jawlensky, Kandinsky, and the like; through Feb. 29. (Closed Mondays.)... **JACKSON**, 32 E. 69th St.: Paintings by the late Bob Thompson, objects and assemblages by Antoni Tàpies, and lithographs and plexigrams by the composer John Cage; through Jan. 29. (Closed Mondays.)... **JANIS**, 6 W. 57th St.: Recent developments in realistic painting and sculpture by Richard Estes, Ralph Goings, Robert Graham, and Duane Hanson, to name several; through Feb. 5.... **KORNBLEE**, 58 E. 79th St.: Nineteenth- and twentieth-century Indian and Tibetan miniatures; through Jan. 27. (Closed Mondays.)... **KUHLIK**, 23 E. 67th St.: Gallery artists; through Thursday, Jan. 20. (Closed Mondays.)... **O.K. HARRIS**, 465 West Broadway: Realistic sculptures by Duane Hanson, small abstract welded-metal pieces by Marilynn Gelfman-Pereira, and paintings of knives, scissors, and hammers by Nakagawa; starting Saturday, Jan. 15. (Closed Mondays.)... **PALEY & LOWE**, 59 Wooster St.: Paintings and sculptures by, among others, Mike Bakaty, Michael Goldberg, and Jim Starrett; through Jan. 26. (Closed Mondays.)... **PHOENIX**, 939 Madison Ave., at 74th St.: Paintings and constructions by two women, Fritzie Abadi and Jo Warner, and one man, Kazimiras Zoromskis; through Saturday, Jan. 22. (Closed Mondays.)... **RENÉ**, 6 W. 57th St.: Soto, Le Parc, and others; starting Thursday, Jan. 13.... **STAEMPFLI**, 47 E. 77th St.: Ritual art from Melanesia and the New Hebrides; through Feb. 5. (Closed Mondays.) ... **WESTBETH**, 155 Bank St.: Nine one-man shows; through Jan. 30. (Fridays through Sundays, 2 to 8.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

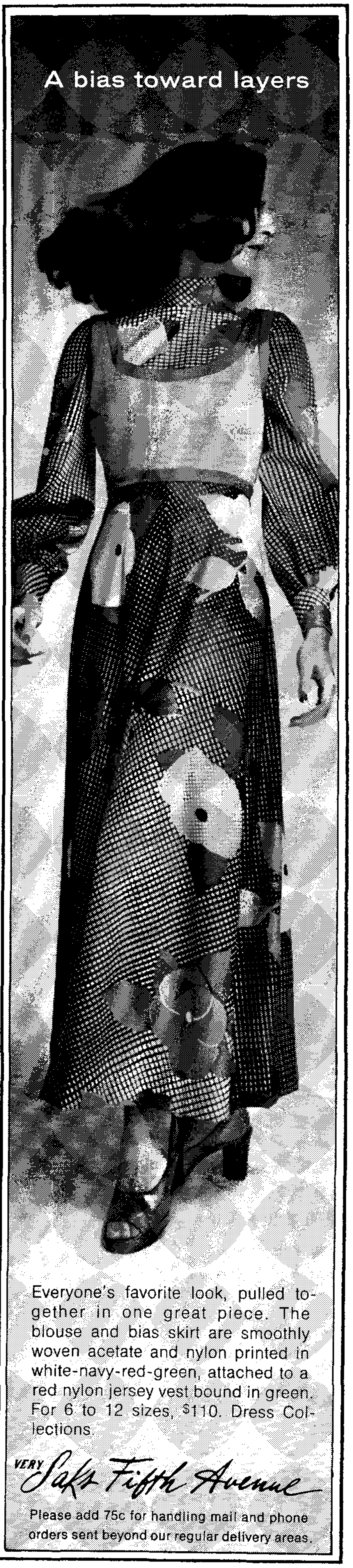
Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—About thirty portraits and self-portraits of artists, in paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints, along with photos of artists in their studios by Arnold Newman; starting Tuesday, Jan. 18.... ¶ Eighty paintings, sculptures, and pieces of jewelry from Tibet, Nepal, and Kashmir, done between the seventh century and the nineteenth; through Jan. 30. (Tuesdays and Fridays, 10 to 9; Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—Naïve art from the Museum's collection; through April 10.... ¶ An extended structure of four-foot tetrahedral modules by Tony Smith, whose Minimal constructions carry overtones of reference; through Jan. 31. (Mondays, noon to 7; Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—About eighty sculptures and ten paintings by John Chamberlain, best known for constructions made of crushed automobile parts; through Feb. 20.... ¶ Examples of their own works selected by ten American artists—Bearden, Beauchamp, Frank, Grooms, Johnson, Kriesberg, Kurhajec, Maryan, Westermann, and Schumann; starting Friday, Jan. 14. (Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 6 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Whitney Museum, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—Paintings, sketches, and tiles by Jay Van Everen, identified with the Synchromist movement during the twenties; starting Thursday, Jan. 13.... ¶ Figurative paintings of fantasy by Susan Hall; through Feb. 6. (Weekdays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 10; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Forty-three paintings, most of them religious in theme, done in colonial Peru by unknown Indians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; through Jan. 23.... ¶ A new addition to the Museum's American period rooms, the Worgelt Study, embodies the Art Deco style in every detail, from furniture to bar decanters.... ¶ The newly installed Schenck House Gallery focusses on the Jan Martuse


A bias toward layers

Everyone's favorite look, pulled together in one great piece. The blouse and bias skirt are smoothly woven acetate and nylon printed in white-navy-red-green, attached to a red nylon jersey vest bound in green. For 6 to 12 sizes, $110. Dress Collections.

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Schenck House, a Brooklyn miller's dwelling and one of the most important surviving examples of seventeenth-century architecture. . . . ¶ The recently opened Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Galleries contain furniture and decorations of the principal artists, designers, and craftsmen of the period. (Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, 15 W. 77th St.—Approximately a hundred costumes collected from areas extending from the Balkans to Siberia and from Vietnam to Lapland, representing both regal and peasant dress worn by men and women. (Weekdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Asia House, 112 E. 64th St.—Thirty-five Japanese "Nanga" paintings on paper and silk of the early eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth; starting Thursday, Jan. 13. (Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

China House, 125 E. 65th St.—More than a hundred Chinese objects in gold and silver that go back as far as 1500 B.C.; through Jan. 30. (Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 2 to 5.)

The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park—Seventy-five pieces of stained glass ranging in size from small panels to windows more than sixteen feet high, from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Finch College Museum of Art, 62 E. 78th St.—Works by Michael Mazur and Paul Gedeohn concerned with problems of visual perception; through Saturday, Jan. 15. (Daily, except Mondays, 1 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—Suites of prints on Old Testament themes by Chagall, Kokoschka, Picasso, Dali, Dine, Ben Zion, and others; starting Thursday, Jan. 13. (Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 5; Fridays, 11 to 3; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—An exhibition of William Blake's art and writings, centering on five books done in illuminated text; through Saturday, Jan. 22. . . . ¶ Six drawings by Albrecht Dürer, saluting the five hundredth anniversary of his birth and accompanied by a small group of sixteenth-century drawings; through Saturday, Jan. 22. . . . ¶ A dozen watercolor illustrations by Blake for Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso;" through Saturday, Jan. 22. . . . ¶ Medieval jewelled bindings and illuminated manuscripts; through Jan. 29. (Weekdays, 9:30 to 5.)

Museum of Primitive Art, 15 W. 54th St.—Seventy-five examples of pre-Columbian Mexican art from 1200 B.C. to 1500 A.D. (Wednesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5; Saturdays, noon to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—Twenty dolls of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including German Kewpies, French *bébés*, and early American rubber dolls; through Jan. 30. . . . ¶ Thirty Currier & Ives prints of farm and country life and sporting scenes, plus a sleighing tableau of the late eighteen-sixties; through Feb. 27. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—Sculptures from the Society's collection, mainly marble or plaster portrait busts but also bronze and wood carvings and furniture. (Tuesdays through Fridays, and Sundays, 1 to 5; Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 799-4420, for Philharmonic Hall TR 4-2424, for Carnegie Hall CI 7-7459, and for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday, Jan. 12, at 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Martina Arroyo, Judith Forst, Enrico DiGiuseppe, and Matteo Manuguerra; and "Pagliacci," with Lilian Sukis, Franco Corelli, Sherrill Milnes, Dominic Cossa, and Andrea Velis. . . . ¶ Thursday, Jan. 13, at 8: "Samson et Dalila," with Sandra Warfield, James McCracken, William Walker, John Macurdy, and Paul Plishka. . . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 14, at 8: "Così Fan Tutte," with Teresa Zylis-Gara, Rosalind Elias, Colette Boky, Pietro Bottazzo, Theodor Uppman, and Walter Berry. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 15, at 1: "Die Meistersinger," with Pilar Lorengar, Shirley Love, James King, Theo Adam, Ezio Flagello, Benno Kusche, Loren Driscoll, and Donald Gramm. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 15, at 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Martina Arroyo, Judith Forst, Enrico DiGiuseppe, and Matteo Manuguerra; and "Pagliacci," with Lilian Sukis, Franco Corelli, Sherrill Milnes, Dominic Cossa, and Andrea Velis. . . . ¶ Monday, Jan. 17, at 8: "Samson et Dalila," with Grace Bumbry, James McCracken, William Walker, John Macurdy, and Paul Plishka. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Jan. 18, at 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Martina Arroyo, Judith Forst, Enrico DiGiuseppe, and Matteo Manuguerra; and "Pagliacci," with Lilian Sukis, Franco Corelli, Sherrill Milnes, Theodor Uppman, and Andrea Velis. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Jan. 19, at 8: A new production of Debussy's "Pelléas et Mélisande," with Judith Blegen, Lili Chookasian, Barry McDaniel, Thomas Stewart, and Giorgio Tozzi. . . . ¶ Thursday, Jan. 20, at 8: "Rigoletto," with Anna Moffo, Joann Grillo, Enrico DiGiuseppe, Robert Merrill, Justino Díaz, and James Morris. . . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 21, at 8: "La Forza del Destino," with Leontyne Price, Judith Forst, Franco Corelli, Mario Sereni, Ezio Flagello, and Fernando Corena. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 22, at 2: "Così Fan Tutte," with Teresa Zylis-Gara, Rosalind Elias, Colette Boky, Pietro Bottazzo, Theodor Uppman, and Walter Berry. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 22, at 7:15: "Die Meistersinger," with Lucine Amara, Mildred Miller, James King, Giorgio Tozzi, John Macurdy, Rudolf Knoll, Loren Driscoll, and Donald Gramm.

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

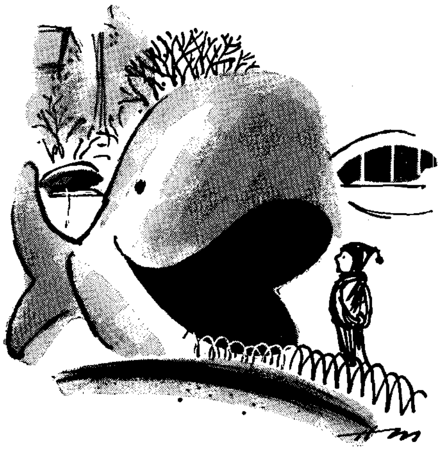
New York Philharmonic—At Philharmonic Hall, Bruno Maderna conducting—Thursday, Jan. 13, at 8:30; Friday, Jan. 14, at 2; Saturday, Jan. 15, at 8:30; and Monday, Jan. 17, at 7:30 (all with Helga Dernesch, soprano); and Thursday, Jan. 20, and Saturday, Jan. 22, at 8:30, and Monday, Jan. 24, at 7:30 (all with Paul Zukofsky, violin, and Leonid Bolotine and Raymond Sabinsky, mandolin).

Boston Symphony—Michael Tilson Thomas conducting an all-Brahms program, with Misha Dichter, piano. (Philharmonic Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 12, and Friday, Jan. 14, at 8:30.) . . . ¶ William Steinberg conducting a varied program; no soloists. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, Jan. 15, at 8.)

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra—Samuel Jones conducting, with Odetta, the folk singer, and the Charles Walker Chorale. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Jan. 16, at 7:30.)

National Orchestra of Belgium—Michael Gielen conducting the orchestra in its first appearance here. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 18, at 8.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Eugene Ormandy conducting a Brahms-Strauss program, with Samuel Mayes, cello, and Joseph de Pasquale, viola. (Philharmonic Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 18, at 8:15.)



Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra—William Steinberg conducting, with Marilyn Horne, soprano; William Cochran, tenor; and Ara Berberian, bass. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 19, at 8.)

Musica Aeterna Orchestra—Frederic Waldman conducting. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Saturday, Jan. 15, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 16, at 7:30, both with Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute, and Nicanor Zabaleta, harp; and Saturday, Jan. 22, at 8, with Grant Johannesen, piano. All seats for the last concert are sold, and only standing room is left.)

Israel Chamber Orchestra—Gary Bertini conducting, with David Bar-Illan, piano, and Erella Talmi, flute. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Jan. 16, at 8:30.)

Osipov Balalaika Orchestra—Vladimir Fedoseyev conducting, with stars of the Bolshoi Ballet and the Bolshoi and Kiev Operas. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, Jan. 21, at 8; Saturday, Jan. 22, at 2:30 and 8; and Sunday, Jan. 23, at 2:30.)

Gregg Smith Singers—Gregg Smith directing a program of baroque music, with a chamber ensemble. (St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. Friday, Jan. 14, at 8:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

St. Cecilia Chorus—David Randolph directing. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 122nd St. Sunday, Jan. 16, at 5. No tickets necessary.)

RECITALS

Sylvia Marlowe—Harpsichord, with Kenneth Cooper, also harpsichord. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 12, at 8.)

Fernando Valenti—Harpsichord, in a recital postponed from Oct. 16. (Hunter College Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. 535-5350. Friday, Jan. 14, at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—Chamber music. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Friday, Jan. 14, at 8, an all-Beethoven program. . . . ¶ Kaufmann Concert Hall, Y.M.H.A., Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Saturday, Jan. 15, at 8, a varied program.)

Baroque Music—A benefit recital performed by Albert Fuller, harpsichord; Charles Bressler, tenor; Fortunato Arico, cello; and Stanley Ritchie, violin. (Library and Museum of the Performing Arts Auditorium, 111 Amsterdam Ave., at 65th St. Friday, Jan. 14, at 9. For information about tickets, call 799-2200, Ext. 203.)

Samuel Lipman—Piano. (Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. 535-5350. Saturday, Jan. 15, at 8.)

Music from Marlboro—With Betty Allen, mezzo-soprano. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, Jan. 15, at 8. For tickets, call GR 3-1391.)

Robert Casadesus and Zino Francescatti—A recital of French sonatas for piano and violin. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Jan. 15, at 8:30.)

Anna Moffo—Soprano. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Jan. 16, at 2:30.)

Leonard Rose—Cello. (Town Hall. JU 2-4536. Monday, Jan. 17, at 8.)

New York Pro Musica—A program of Renaissance and baroque music from Northern Europe. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Monday, Jan. 17, at 8.)

Anne Perret and Rodrigo de Zayas—Mezzo-soprano and lute, in the last in a series of programs, this one devoted to late-baroque German and early-baroque Italian music. (Alice Tully Hall. Monday, Jan. 17, at 8:30.)

Sidney Foster—Piano, in a benefit recital. (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 18, at 8.)

George Neikrug—Cello. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 19, at 8.)

Jean Hakes and Raymond Lynch—Soprano and lute, in a program of Spanish music. (Velez Blanco Patio, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Thursday, Jan. 20, at 8.)

Juilliard String Quartet—With Beveridge Web-

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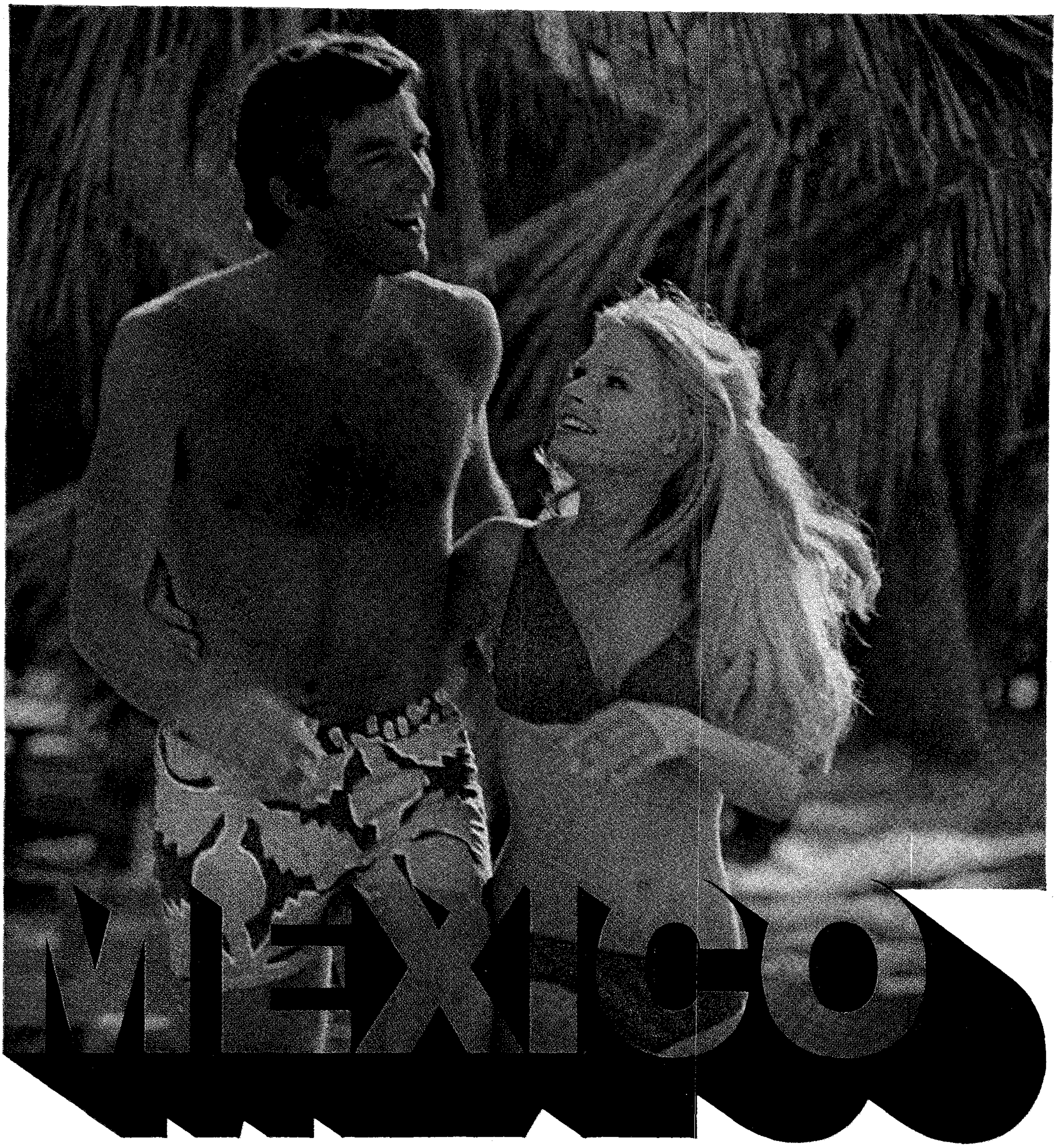

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

ster, piano. (Hunter College Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. 535-5350. Friday, Jan. 21, at 8.)

MISCELLANY

Scots Guards—The regimental band, pipes, drums, and dancers of the British regiment. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Saturday, Jan. 22, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 23, at 1:30 and 5:30.)

JAZZ/FOLK/ROCK/ETC.

Lyrics and Lyricists—The second program (postponed from Jan. 9 and 11) in a series of five in which lyricists (in this case E. Y. Harburg) discuss their work, sometimes with the assistance of their professional performing friends. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, Y.M.H.A., Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Sunday, Jan. 16, at 8, and Tuesday, Jan. 18, at 8:30.)

Jazzmobile All-Stars—Jimmy Heath, Lee Morgan, Roland Hanna, and others. (Town Hall. JU 2-4536. Wednesday, Jan. 19, at 5:45.)

Glenn Miller Orchestra—Town Hall. Friday, Jan. 21, at 8.

SPORTS

Racing—At **LIBERTY BELL,** Philadelphia: Weekdays at 12:30; through Saturday, Feb. 5. . . . **BOWIE,** Md.: Weekdays at 1; through Saturday, March 11. The Bowie Handicap, Saturday, Jan. 15.

Trotting—At Roosevelt Raceway, Westbury: Weekdays at 8; through Tuesday, Feb. 29.

FOR CHILDREN

Music—By the **LITTLE ORCHESTRA SOCIETY:** Thomas Scherman conducting an all-Prokofieff program, with Lisl Weil, illustrator, and Dimitri Toufexis, piano. (Philharmonic Hall. Saturday, Jan. 15, at 11 and 3. For tickets, call PL 7-3460.). . . **LIGHT OPERA OF MANHATTAN:** "Iolanthe," Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 15-16, at 4. . . . ¶ "The Mikado," Saturday, Jan. 22, at 4. (Jan Hus Playhouse, 351 E. 74th St. 535-6310.)

Stage Shows—By the **BIL BAIRD MARIONETTES:** "Peter and the Wolf." (Bil Baird Theatre, 59 Barrow St. YU 9-7060. Saturdays and Sundays at 1 and 3:30.). . . **SALVATORE GUIDA:** "Bravo, the Clown," Saturday, Jan. 15, and Saturday, Jan. 22, at 2:30. . . . ¶ "A Very Special Clown," Sunday, Jan. 16, at 2:30. (Mask Theatre, 125 Fifth Ave., at 19th St. 673-0291.). . . **ROSE LYNCH PRODUCTIONS:** "Hansel and Gretel," Saturdays and Sundays at 1. . . . ¶ "Heidi," Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. (Royal Playhouse, 219 Second Ave., at 14th St. 475-9647.). . . **MERI MINI PLAYERS:** "Looice," Saturday, Jan. 15, at 2:30. . . . ¶ "The Princess and the Pea," Saturday, Jan. 22, at 2:30. (Universalist Church Theatre, 4 W. 76th St. 260-4863.). . . **PICKWICK PUPPET THEATRE:** "Rumpelstiltskin." (McMillin Theatre, Broadway at 116th St. Saturday, Jan. 15, at 3. Tickets at the box office only, after 2:30 on the day of the performance.) . . . **LEA WALLACE PUPPETS:** "Puss in Boots." (Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. LE 4-1672. Saturday, Jan. 22, at 1:30. Children under five not admitted.). . . **YOUNG WORLD FOUNDATION:** "Who Am I?" (Stage 73, 321 E. 73rd St. BU 8-2993. Saturdays and Sundays at 1 and 3:30.)

Junior Museum Studio, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 81st St.—"Children's Paintings from Five Continents," a show of forty paintings from such diverse areas as American Indian reservations, Tanzania, Austria, Honduras, and South Vietnam. Starts Friday, Jan. 14. (Tuesdays, 10 to 9; Wednesdays and Fridays, 10 to 2; Thursdays, 10 to 5; and Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Hayden Planetarium, Central Park W. at 81st St. (873-1300)—The current show in the Sky Theatre is called "By the Stars of Gitche Gumee." (Mondays through Fridays at 2 and 3:30; Saturdays at 11, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5; and Sundays at 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Children under five not admitted.). . . ¶ An hour before the shows, the new Guggenheim Space Theatre presents a projection of the story of astronomy—from man's earliest concepts of the universe to the achievements of the Space Age.

Note—Ice skaters of fourteen and under have the Wollman Memorial Skating Rink, in Central Park, all to themselves, and free, every Monday from 3 to 5:30.

ET ALIA

(The number to call for information about all free entertainment in the city is 472-1003.)

United Nations—Visitors may attend periodic meetings of the Security Council and regular sessions of various commissions and committees. A limited number of tickets are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the admissions desk in the public lobby no earlier than thirty minutes before each meeting. Meetings usually convene at 10:30 or 11 and at 2:30 or 3, Mondays through Fridays. (General Assembly Building, First Ave. at 45th St.). . . ¶ Hour-long tours leave the lobby of the General Assembly Building every fifteen minutes or so from 9:15 to 4:45 daily.)

Poetry Readings—Eve Merriam reading from her own works and from the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, plus chamber music by the West End Chamber Ensemble. (Finch College Auditorium, 52 E. 78th St. Sunday, Jan. 16, at 8. For information about tickets, call 288-8450.). . . ¶ Yehuda Amichai reading from his own works, in Hebrew, with English translations read by Stanley Kunitz. (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum Auditorium, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. Tuesday, Jan. 18, at 8:30. For tickets, call YU 8-6783.)

Auctions—At the Parke-Bernet Galleries, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)—Saturday, Jan. 15, at 2: Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English furniture, decorations, and carpets; from various owners. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Jan. 18, at 10:15 and 2: Books, including modern illustrated works, Art Nouveau books, and cookery books; from several collectors.

Film Libraries—At the **MUSEUM OF MODERN ART,** 11 W. 53rd St. (956-7078)—Jan. 12 at 2: Seven short films by Alberto Cavalcanti. . . . ¶ Jan. 12 at 5:30 and Jan. 13 at 2: "48 Hours" (1942), directed by Alberto Cavalcanti. . . . ¶ Jan. 13 at 5:30: Seven short films by Alberto Cavalcanti. . . . ¶ Jan. 13 at 8: "For Them That Trespass" (1948), directed by Alberto Cavalcanti, with Richard Todd. . . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 2: Four short films by Alberto Cavalcanti. . . . ¶ Jan. 14 at 5:30: "Film and Reality" (1939-42), a compilation film by Alberto Cavalcanti and Ernest Lindgren. . . . ¶ Jan. 15 at noon: Four documentary films. . . . ¶ Jan. 15 at 3: "Champagne Charlie" (1944), directed by Alberto Cavalcanti, with Tommy Trinder. . . . ¶ Jan. 15 at 5:30: "Dead of Night" (1945), an omnibus film. . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 2 and 5:30: "The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickelby" (1946), directed by Alberto Cavalcanti, with Cedric Hardwicke. . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 1: "For Them That Trespass" (1948). . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 6 and Jan. 18 at 2: "Sandy" (1926), directed by Harry Beaumont, with Madge Bellamy. . . . ¶ Jan. 18 at 5:30 and Jan. 19 at 2: "Song of the Sea" (1954), in Portuguese, directed by Alberto Cavalcanti; no English titles. . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 5:30: "The Foreman Went to France" (1941), directed by Charles Frend, with Tommy Trinder and Constance Cummings. . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 2: "Film and Reality" (1939-42). . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 5:30: "They Made Me a Fugitive" (1947), directed by Alberto Cavalcanti, with Trevor Howard and Sally Gray. . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 8: "En Rade" (1927), directed by Alberto Cavalcanti, with Catherine Hessling. (A limited number of reservations are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the Museum after 11 on the day of the showing or, if it is a Sunday, after noon. Reservations for the showings at 8 will not be accepted before 5:30. Mondays, admission on a first-come, first-served basis.) . . . **ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES,** at the Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (677-3197)—Films by Smith, Renoir, Ruttmann, Rossellini, Riefenstahl, Vertov, Snow, Vigo, Warhol, and others. Jan. 12-14 at 6, 8, and 10; Jan. 15 at 6 and 10; Jan. 16 and 18 at 6, 8, and 10; Jan. 19 at 6 and 10; and Jan. 20 at 8. . . . **WHITNEY MUSEUM,** 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (249-4100)—A series called "The New American Filmmakers" is being screened at noon (except Thursdays), 2, and 4 (plus 6 and 8 on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings). Tickets available two hours before each show.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20		

THE FILMS IN THIS LISTING ARE DESCRIBED IN BRIEF IN THE SECTION BELOW

EAST SIDE

Art, 36 E. 8th. (GR 3-7014)
"The Go-Between" and "Bed and Board."

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Through Jan. 15: "Thousands Cheer" and "Sunny."
Jan. 16-18: "Hollywood Canteen."
From Jan. 19: "Love Me or Leave Me."

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (475-5510)
Jan. 12: "They Shoot Horses, Don't They?" and "Z."
Jan. 13-16: "Shadow of a Doubt" and "Saboteur."
Jan. 17-19: "The Birds" and "Psycho."
From Jan. 20: "North by Northwest" and "Suspicion."

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (GR 5-1660)
"Long Ago, Tomorrow."

Kips Bay, 2nd Ave. at 31st. (LE 2-6668)
Through Jan. 18: "A Night at the Opera" and "A Day at the Races."
From Jan. 19: To be announced.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"The French Connection."

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through Jan. 18: "Murmur of the Heart" and "Circle of Love."
From Jan. 19: "Together."

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (PL 9-1411)
"The Hospital."

Trans-Lux East, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (PL 9-2262)
"Sunday Bloody Sunday."

Fine Arts, 130 E. 58th. (755-6030)
"Eagle in a Cage."

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (EL 5-3320)
"The Garden of the Finzi-Continis."

Baronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"Such Good Friends."

Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"El Topo."

R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 1, 220 E. 59th. (688-0750)
"The Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight."

R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 2, 220 E. 59th. (688-0750)
"The Boy Friend."

Cinema I, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-6022)
"A Clockwork Orange."

Cinema II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-0774)
"Minnie and Moskowitz."

Columbia I, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
"The Last Picture Show."

Columbia II, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Through Jan. 19: "Happy Birthday, Wanda June."
From Jan. 20: "To Find a Man."

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (RE 7-2622)
"Made for Each Other."

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (RE 4-0302)
"Le Boucher."

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (TR 9-1313)
Through Jan. 18: "$."
From Jan. 19: "The Straw Dogs."

72nd St. Playhouse, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (BU 8-9304)
"The Go-Between" and "Bed and Board."

Juliet 1, 3rd Ave. at 83rd. (249-1806)
Through Jan. 13: "The French Connection."
From Jan. 14: "Cisco Pike" and "Machine Gun McCain."

Juliet 2, 3rd Ave. at 83rd. (249-1806)
"The French Connection."

Trans-Lux 85th St., Madison at 85th. (BU 8-3180)
Through Jan. 18: "Long Ago, Tomorrow."
From Jan. 19: To be announced.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through Jan. 18: "The Go-Between" and "Claire's Knee."
From Jan. 19: To be announced.

Orpheum, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (AT 9-4607)
"Dirty Harry."

Loew's Ciné, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (427-1332)
"$."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"Diamonds Are Forever."

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 1, Lexington at 86th. (688-1717)
"The Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight."

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2, Lexington at 86th. (688-1717)
Through Jan. 18: "Kidnapped."
From Jan. 19: "Together."

WEST SIDE

Garrick, 152 Bleecker St. (533-8270)
Jan. 12: "Casque d'Or."
Jan. 13: "La Guerre Est Finie."
Jan. 14: "Last Year at Marienbad."
Jan. 15: "To Die in Madrid."
Jan. 16: "Purple Noon."
Jan. 17: "The Crime of Monsieur Lange."
Jan. 18: "Lola Montès."
From Jan. 19: "Night of the Living Dead" and "Invasion of the Body Snatchers."

Waverly, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (WA 9-8037)
"Diamonds Are Forever."

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (GR 7-7874)
Through Jan. 18: "Klute" and "THX 1138."
From Jan. 19: "Rider on the Rain" and "Borsalino."

5th Ave. Cinema, 5th Ave. at 12th. (WA 4-8339)
"WR—Mysteries of the Organism."

Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Through Jan. 18: "Long Ago, Tomorrow" and "Joanna."
From Jan. 19: To be announced.

Elgin, 8th Ave. at 19th. (675-0935)
Through Jan. 13: "The Wild Child."
Jan. 14-16: "Shoot the Piano Player" and "Mississippi Mermaid."
From Jan. 17: "Monterey Pop," "Don't Look Back," and "Gimme Shelter."

R.K.O. 23rd St. Cinema, 8th Ave. at 23rd. (255-7050)
Through Jan. 18: "Carnal Knowledge."
From Jan. 19: "Together."

Criterion, B'way at 44th. (JU 2-1796)
"Nicholas and Alexandra."

Bijou Cinema, 209 W. 45th. (757-6792)
"Vampire Doll" and "The Tattooed Swordswoman."

Rivoli, B'way at 49th. (247-1633)
"Fiddler on the Roof."

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (PL 7-2406)
"Doctor Zhivago."

Music Hall, 6th Ave. at 50th. (PL 7-3100)
Jan. 12: "Bedknobs and Broomsticks."
From Jan. 13: "The Cowboys."

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Star Spangled Girl."

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (581-2323)
"The Decameron."

Playboy, 110 W. 57th. (JU 6-4448)
"Macbeth."

Little Carnegie, 146 W. 57th. (246-5123)
"Sunday Bloody Sunday."

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (PL 7-2131)
"Eva . . . Was Everything but Legal."

Lincoln Art, 225 W. 57th. (JU 2-2333)
"Modern Times."

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"King Lear."

Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Made for Each Other."

Cinema Studio, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
"Diamonds Are Forever."

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through Jan. 20: "Ginger" and "The Games Men Play."

Embassy 72nd St., B'way at 72nd. (SC 4-6745)
"The Go-Between" and "Claire's Knee."

New Yorker, B'way at 88th. (TR 4-9189)
Through Jan. 19: "Utamaro and His Five Women" and "Teorema."
From Jan. 20: "Angela Davis: A Portrait of a Revolutionary" and "Ganga Zumba."

Symphony, B'way at 95th. (AC 2-6600)
Through Jan. 18: "Klute" and "The Hired Hand."
From Jan. 19: "Together."

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (AC 2-3370)
Through Jan. 13: "The World of Apu" and "The Immortal Story."
Jan. 14-16: "The Bride Wore Black" and "Purple Noon."
Jan. 17-18: "The Exterminating Angel" and "Cul-de-Sac."
Jan. 19-20: "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" and "Last Year at Marienbad."

Midtown, B'way at 99th. (AC 2-1200)
Through Jan. 18: "Long Ago, Tomorrow" and "Something for Everyone."
From Jan. 19: To be announced.

Olympia, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Through Jan. 13: Buster Keaton Festival.
Jan. 14-15: "Rosemary's Baby" and "Night of the Living Dead."
Jan. 16-18: "Taking Off" and "Two-Lane Blacktop."
From Jan. 19: "Gimme Shelter" and "Soul to Soul."

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Bed and Board—About the married life of Truffaut's hero, Antoine Doinel (Jean-Pierre Léaud). Léaud appears to have developed a dogged resistance to acting, but Antoine's bride, Claude Jade, who looks like a less ethereal, more practical Catherine Deneuve, is lovely. The movie is cheerful, if conventionally "beguiling." In French. (Art and 72nd St. Playhouse.)

Bedknobs and Broomsticks—Angela Lansbury as an apprentice witch, in a mixture of wizardry and ineptitude from the Disney studios; the picture is as uncertain of itself as the title indicates. Moderately enjoyable, though there are moments of patriotic sentimentality circa "Mrs. Miniver." (Music Hall; Jan. 12.)

The Birds (1963)—Some of the special effects are amusing, and a few are perverse and frightening, but the effects took over in this Hitchcock scare-picture, and he failed to make the plot situations convincing. The script (by Evan Hunter) is weak, and the acting is so awkward that often one doesn't know how to take the characters. With Rod Taylor, Tippi Hedren, Suzanne Pleshette, and Jessica Tandy. (St. Marks Cinema; Jan. 17-19.)

Borsalino (1970)—Alain Delon (who looks great in evening clothes) and Jean-Paul Belmondo as hoods in the Marseille of the thirties. A handsome production, but the spoof falters. Jacques Deray directed. In French. (8th St. Playhouse; starting Jan. 19.)

Le Boucher—With Stéphane Audran and Jean Yanne, directed by Claude Chabrol. In French. (68th St. Playhouse.)

The Boy Friend—Ken Russell has turned the Sandy Wilson show into an anti-musical and destroyed most of the pleasure the audience might have had. The glittering, joyless numbers keep coming at you; you never get any relief from Russell's supposed virtuosity. Twiggy sings adequately (though not well enough for the load of singing she's asked to carry), and she dances rather better, but Russell doesn't develop her possibilities, and she remains an appealing blank. (R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 2.)

The Bride Wore Black (1968)—Truffaut's film in homage to Hitchcock, with Jeanne Moreau as the racked and elegant widow of a bridegroom shot on the steps of the church. Photographed by Raoul Coutard. The hero-worshipping of Hitchcock seems a bit wasteful, for Truffaut is the infinitely greater filmmaker, and imbues even this mechanical story with something finely detailed and lyric about love. In French. (Thalia; Jan. 14-16.)

Carnal Knowledge—A grimly purposeful satire about depersonalization and how we use each other sexually as objects, and, in Mike Nichols' cold, slick, emphatic style, it is like a neon sign that spells out the soullessness of neon. From a script by Jules Feiffer, with Jack Nicholson, Arthur Garfunkel, Candice Bergen, and Ann-Margret. (R.K.O. 23rd St. Cinema; through Jan. 18.)

Casque d'Or (1952)—The young Simone Signoret had her finest role as a gigolette with a glorious helmet of golden hair in Jacques Becker's sultry, poetic account of the Paris underworld of 1900. Her performance is a triumph of sensuality and physical assurance; she makes this fundamentally trashy and touristy view of lowlife worth seeing. With Serge Reggiani, Claude Dauphin, and Gaston Modot. In French. (Garrick; Jan. 12.)

Circle of Love (1965)—Roger Vadim's lavish color version of the famous Arthur Schnitzler play. (The 1950 version, directed by Max Ophuls, was called "La Ronde.") It was adapted by Jean Anouilh, but it came to this country dubbed, and in this form it's so silly

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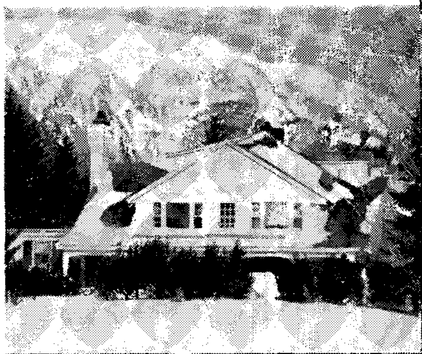

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

it seems to be self-parody. With Jane Fonda, Jean-Claude Brialy, Anna Karina, Marie Dubois, Maurice Ronet, Jean Sorel, and many others. (34th St. East; through Jan. 18.)

Cisco Pike—With Gene Hackman, Karen Black, and Kris Kristofferson, directed by Bill L. Norton. (Juliet 1; starting Jan. 14.)

Claire's Knee—The air is thick with summer and leisure in Eric Rohmer's serene story of a vacationing diplomat (Jean-Claude Brialy) who says he is interested only in women's minds and then has an "undefined desire" to stroke a young girl's knee. There's a rather enigmatic woman novelist who stands in for the director and makes ponderous remarks, but Rohmer's quiet, complacent movie-novel game is pleasing and an exquisitely gawky teen-age actress, Beatrice Romand, who plays a subsidiary role, looks like a Pisanello princess. In French. (Embassy 72nd St.... ¶ U. A. East; through Jan. 18.)

A Clockwork Orange—Cold and repellent. Stanley Kubrick's new film might be the work of a strict and exacting German professor who set out to make a porno-violent sci-fi comedy. (Cinema I.)

The Cowboys—With John Wayne, directed by Mark Rydell. (Music Hall; starting Jan. 13.)

The Crime of Monsieur Lange (1935)—Directed by Jean Renoir—not at the great peak of his "Rules of the Game" but very much by the same man. René Lefèvre plays M. Lange, technically guilty of murder but not morally. This is 1935, and he is at the bottom of the heap. We see him, looking hungry, spending as much time as possible in bed, writing Wild West stories that nobody reads. Jules Berry is his foppishly dressed employer, a gifted embezzler. Some scenes have the temperament of Restoration comedy. The film amounts to a fable about capitalism, to a caustic revenge farce, to an idyll sweetened by the grace of reprieve as the lovers on the run push their luck in a plundered interlude before the hero is caught. In French. (Garrick; Jan. 17.)

Cul-de-Sac (1966)—A slapstick comedy of horrors about an ugly, bald, whimpering, middle-aged homosexual (Donald Pleasence) whose beautiful young French wife (Françoise Dorléac) dresses him up in her nighties. This strange form of connubial bliss is interrupted by an American gangster (old gravel-voiced Lionel Stander himself). Roman Polanski directed this freak show. (Thalia; Jan. 17-18.)

Angela Davis: A Portrait of a Revolutionary—Directed by Yolande du Luart. (New Yorker; starting Jan. 20.)

A Day at the Races (1937)—The Marx Brothers in a sort of morning after to "A Night at the Opera." It has something to do with a sanatorium, a group of bankers, a blond siren, and a steeplechase. Groucho is Hugo Z. Hackenbush, a horse doctor posing as a fashionable neurologist. ("Either this man is dead or my watch has stopped.") He shuffles off with the picture. The cast includes Margaret Dumont, Maureen O'Sullivan, and Allan Jones; the teen-age Dorothy Dandridge may be glimpsed among the kids in the "All God's Chillun Got Rhythm" number. Sam Wood directed. (Kips Bay; through Jan. 18.)

The Decameron—Based on Boccaccio's tales, directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini, with Franco Citti, Ninetto Davoli, and Pasolini. In Italian. (Festival.)

Diamonds Are Forever—With Sean Connery as 007, directed by Guy Hamilton. (86th St. East, Waverly, and Cinema Studio.)

Dirty Harry—With Clint Eastwood, directed by Don Siegel. (Orpheum.)

Doctor Zhivago (1965)—The poet-doctor (Omar Sharif) isn't a strong enough protagonist to bind together the events of the Russian Revolution, and so one seems to be on the sidelines watching an enormous, romantic, historical pageant. David Lean put it all together (or tried to) from Robert Bolt's adaptation of the Pasternak novel. With Julie Christie, Alec Guinness, Tom Courtenay, and Rod Steiger milling about. (Guild.)

$—Bank heist in Hamburg, masterminded by Warren Beatty, assisted by Goldie Hawn as a kook hooker. For the first twenty minutes, it's impossible to know what's going on; after that, there are so many camera setups and such noisy, overextended chases that the whole thing becomes hectic and exhausting. Brutality and tension are a poor substitute for pleasurable suspense. Overwritten and overdirected by Richard Brooks. (Loew's Ciné.... ¶ Tower East; through Jan. 18.)

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Don't Look Back (1967)—Bob Dylan in the affected *cinéma-vérité* film by Donn Pennebaker that features songs and put-downs. With Donovan and Joan Baez. (Elgin; starting Jan. 17.)

Eagle in a Cage—With John Gielgud and Ralph Richardson, directed by Fielder Cook. (Fine Arts.)

Eva... Was Everything but Legal—Directed by Torgny Wickman. (Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

The Exterminating Angel (1962)—A comic metaphor about a dinner party that so supernaturally grips the members that it can't be broken up, but declines into primitive conflict and havoc. Directed by Luis Buñuel; inadequately acted, but still an interesting and funny piece that no one else could have made. In Spanish. (Thalia; Jan. 17-18.)

Fiddler on the Roof—A demonstration that square can be beautiful, too. Directed by Norman Jewison and starring Topol, the movie is a joyous, powerful musical epic. (Rivoli. Mondays through Thursdays at 8 and Fridays through Sundays at 8:30. Matinées Tuesdays through Thursdays at 1:30 and Saturdays and Sundays at 1 and 5. Reserved seats only.)

The French Connection—Tracking down a shipment of heroin in New York City. A slam-bang thriller that zaps the audience by noise, speed, and brutality. It's certainly exciting, but that excitement isn't necessarily a pleasure. Gene Hackman plays the lowlifer police detective who cracks the case as a mixture of Joe and Archie; William Friedkin directed. (Murray Hill and Juliet 2.... ¶ Juliet 1; through Jan. 13.)

The Games Men Play (1968)—Directed by Daniel Tinayre. (Regency; through Jan. 20.)

Ganga Zumba—Directed by Carlos Diegues. In Portuguese. (New Yorker; starting Jan. 20.)

The Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight—When farce isn't expertly played and directed, it becomes just stupid, and that's what happens to this Mafia farce, from the Jimmy Breslin book. Lionel Stander, Jo Van Fleet, and Jerry Orbach are among the clownish crooks; Leigh Taylor-Young and the talented young Robert De Niro are the romantic leads. Directed by James Goldstone. (R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 1 and R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 1.)

The Garden of the Finzi-Continis—Vittorio De Sica's finest film in many years—a lyric evocation of a vanished group of people (the cultivated, aristocratic Jewish-Italian landowners) and a vanished mood. Based on Giorgio Bassani's semi-autobiographical novel, the film records how Giorgio, a middle-class outsider (Lino Capolicchio), is drawn into the decaying enchanted world of the Finzi-Continis by the imperious, contrary Micòl (Dominique Sanda); she and her languid brother (Helmut Berger) are spoiled beautiful people without the will to save themselves. Perhaps the only film that records the halfhearted anti-Jewish measures of the Mussolini period—which were, however, sufficient to wipe out the Finzi-Continis and all they represented. In Italian. (Plaza.)

Gimme Shelter (1970)—The Rolling Stones in their American tour, and especially in the disaster at Altamont. (Elgin; starting Jan. 17. ... ¶ Olympia; starting Jan. 19.)

Ginger—With Cheri Caffaro, directed by Don Schain. (Regency; through Jan. 20.)

The Go-Between—Harold Pinter wrote the stinging screenplay of this 1900 period piece from an L. P. Hartley novel about a twelve-year-old schoolboy at a posh Norfolk house-party who is press-ganged into being the postman between Julie Christie, the heiress of the hall, and Alan Bates, a mere tenant farmer. Accurate about the English class system, pretty to look at, rather cold-hearted. Perfidious Albion basks in the sun and courteously destroys lives; the film partakes in the prevailing, pretty cruelty. With Margaret Leighton. Directed by Joseph Losey. (Art, 72nd St. Playhouse, and Embassy 72nd St.... ¶ U. A. East; through Jan. 18.)

La Guerre Est Finie (1966)—Jorge Semprun wrote and Alain Resnais directed this ambivalent but compelling study of a failed radical. Yves Montand is a Communist courier who goes on stoically carrying out policies he knows are futile. With Ingrid Thulin and Geneviève Bujold. In French. (Garrick; Jan. 13.)

Happy Birthday, Wanda June—Rod Steiger as the sexist big-game hunter in Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.'s, attempt at a Shavian play of ideas about the end of the bullish dominating male. Steiger's disastrously familiar paranoid rhythms push Vonnegut's florid lines over a cliff, and they splash when they land. Badly misdirected by Mark Robson, who tried for a stylized tone that doesn't work, though the miscast Susannah York comes through as an able farceur and Pamelyn Ferdin has a few funny moments as Wanda June. Most of the time, it's like seeing a bad production of a synthetic, trying-to-be-clever Broadway play. (Columbia II; through Jan. 19.)

The Hired Hand—Peter Fonda's first piece of direction, set in an Old West that is already changing. He and Warren Oates play great friends who turn up at the house of Fonda's ten-years-older wife (Verna Bloom) after he has left her on her own to run a farm and a life for six years. She gives him a guarded welcome, with a feminine skepticism that is truly caught. (Symphony; through Jan. 18.)

Hiroshima, Mon Amour (1959)—A tortured love affair between a French actress and a Japanese architect in the city that was devastated by the first atomic bomb. Alain Resnais's controversial début as a feature-film director; there is no controversy, however, about Emmanuèle Riva's splendid performance. In French. (Thalia; Jan. 19-20.)

Hollywood Canteen (1944)—One of those shameless testimonials to its own patriotism that Hollywood turned out during the Second World War. This one is from Warners and features what used to be called the Warners stable: Bette Davis, John Garfield, Ida Lupino, Dennis Morgan, Sydney Greenstreet, Alexis Smith, Peter Lorre, and so on, as well as Eddie Cantor, Jack Benny, Joe E. Brown, Joan Crawford, Barbara Stanwyck, the ineffable Andrews Sisters, the superb dancers Rosario and Antonio, Jimmy Dorsey and his band, and on and on. This loosely held together musical revue takes one back to an era when "Yank" was meant to be a cheery word and patriotic songs were bouncy ("Gettin' Corns for My Country"). Written and directed by Delmar Daves. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 16-18.)

The Hospital—George C. Scott is at his most hammily brilliant in Paddy Chayevsky's farce about the killing incompetence in a modern big-city hospital. The picture strains for seriousness now and then, but even when it makes a fool of itself, it's still funny. Arthur Hiller directed. (Sutton.)

The Immortal Story (1968)—Orson Welles' film, taken from Isak Dinesen's story about an allegorical millionaire in Macao. With Jeanne Moreau. (Thalia; through Jan. 13.)

Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956)—A B-picture classic. This plain and inexpensive piece of science fiction employs few of the resources of the cinema (to put it mildly), but it has an idea that confirms everyone's suspicions. People are being turned into vegetables—and who can tell the difference? Kevin McCarthy and Dana Wynter, who try to cling to their animality and individuality, seem inexplicably backward to the rest of the townspeople. With Carolyn Jones, and Sam Peckinpah, who worked on the script, in a few bits. Directed by Don Siegel. (Garrick; starting Jan. 19.)

Joanna (1968)—Joanna (Genevieve Waite) gets pregnant by a beautiful black, and though he goes to prison for ten years, she decides to have the baby. Moronic. (Greenwich; through Jan. 18.)

Buster Keaton Festival—A rare collection of silent features, each accompanied by two shorts. Jan. 12-13: "Seven Chances." (Olympia.)

Kidnapped—Jack Pulman has drawn a trim, craftsmanlike screenplay from Robert Louis Stevenson's "Kidnapped" and its sequel, "David Balfour." The director, Delbert Mann, keeps everything comprehensible, though he doesn't seem to know how to make the narrative stirring. Fortunately, Michael Caine, who gets better all the time, acts Alan Breck with a mixture of swagger and intelligence that keeps the movie alive. Caine is assisted by Trevor Howard as the Lord Advocate, Lawrence Douglas as David, and Donald Pleasence as old Ebenezer, a Scrooge if ever there was one. Not as exciting as the best swashbuckling adventure movies, but the feeling behind the whole production is so decent and affectionate that viewers may forgive the deficiencies. The exteriors were shot in Scotland. (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2; through Jan. 18.)

King Lear—Blindness and nothingness are the controlling metaphors in this gray, cold Peter Brook production. Paul Scofield gives a frigid performance, and the cast, including the Cordelia, have dead eyes. You may feel dead while you watch. (Paris.)

Klute—Jane Fonda in her finest dramatic performance yet, as an intelligent, high-bracket call girl, in Alan J. Pakula's murder melodrama. The picture is reminiscent of the good detective mysteries of the forties, though the suspense devices are not as entertaining as they used to be. With Donald Sutherland. (8th St. Playhouse and Symphony; through Jan. 18.)

The Last Picture Show—Peter Bogdanovich's fine, straightforward, involving narrative picture about boys trying to reach manhood, without much in the way of models. The setting is small-town Texas in the early fifties. From Larry McMurtry's novel. With Timothy Bottoms and Jeff Bridges. (Columbia I.)

Last Year at Marienbad (1961)—Alain Resnais directed and Alain Robbe-Grillet provided the script for this very pretty puzzle picture. Delphine Seyrig is the high-fashion sleeping beauty. In French. (Garrick; Jan. 14. . . . ¶ Thalia; Jan. 19-20.)

Long Ago, Tomorrow—Doomed love between paraplegics, who must go through considerable wheelchair wiggling even to kiss. For people who want to be turned on by the sadness of it. With Malcolm McDowell and Nanette Newman, directed by Bryan Forbes. (Gramercy. . . . ¶ Trans-Lux 85th St., Greenwich, and Midtown; through Jan. 18.)

Love Me or Leave Me (1955)—Doris Day as Ruth Etting. A lot of people were deeply impressed with this melodramatic bio, which tries for an authentic show-business tawdriness; it's certainly better than most movie bios of popular entertainers, but that's not saying all that much, though the script by Daniel Fuchs and Isobel Lennart is several notches above the usual, and James Cagney brings frightening strength to his role as the singer's vicious lover. Charles Vidor directed. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; starting Jan. 19.)

Macbeth—The latest version, directed by Roman Polanski. (Playboy.)

Machine Gun McCain (1970)—An Italian-made film, with John Cassavetes and Britt Ekland. Directed by Giuliano Montaldo. (Juliet 1; starting Jan. 14.)

Made for Each Other—Renée Taylor and her husband, Joseph Bologna, wrote and star in this original, romantic comedy about a knocked-out bleached-blond failed actress and a grubby misfit who meet in an encounter group. The movie believes that there is a Kingdom of Heaven that you can get to if you help each other be vulnerable and open. It's Frank Capracorn updated by ethnic humor and simplified Freudianism, but it's so skillfully worked out that it's emotionally pleasing, and Renée Taylor's performance gives the film a depth and conviction that make it the most satisfying comedy of 1971. Robert B. Bean directed. (Beekman and Paramount.)

Minnie and Moskowitz—With Gena Rowlands and Seymour Cassel, directed by John Cassavetes. (Cinema II.)

Mississippi Mermaid (1970)—A small, appealing film by Truffaut, bungled as a thriller but gently expressive as a love story. Belmondo plays a rich colonialist on a tropical island who orders a bride (Catherine Deneuve) from France through the classified ads. In French. (Elgin; Jan. 14-16.)

Modern Times (1936)—Chaplin, in beautiful form. (Lincoln Art.)

Monterey Pop (1969)—Donn Pennebaker's infectious record of the Monterey music festival, with fifty thousand teen-agers and musicians. (Elgin; starting Jan. 17.)

Lola Montès (1955)—Max Ophuls' masterpiece, shown in its full form. His command of baroque style and of comic detail transforms the real-life story of a courtesan's decline into a circus-trapeze artist—a story fairly trite in itself—into a work of amazing and moving density. With Martine Carroll, Anton Walbrook, Peter Ustinov. In French. (Garrick; Jan. 18.)

Murmur of the Heart—Louis Malle's portrait of the artist as a young dog. An exhilarating high comedy by the least known of the major French directors. In French. (34th St. East; through Jan. 18.)

Nicholas and Alexandra—As obsequiously respectful as if it had been made about living monarchs who might reward the producer with a command performance. Viewers are put in the position of celebrity-lovers eager to partake of the home life of the dullest of the Czars. Nicholas and Alexandra were two dunces sitting on a volcano, and the solemnly square movie is more interested in the dunces than in the volcano. Directed by Franklin J. Schaffner, but without the sweeping command of large-scale visual imagery he has had in the past. (Criterion. Mondays through Thursdays at 8, Fridays at 8:30, and Saturdays and Sundays at 8:45. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays and Sundays at 1 and 5. Reserved seats only.)

A Night at the Opera (1935)—The Marx Brothers, doing to "Il Trovatore" what should be done to "Il Trovatore." Wonderful. (Kips Bay; through Jan. 18.)

Night of the Living Dead (1968)—It would be fun to be able to dismiss this as undoubtedly the best movie ever made in Pittsburgh, but it also happens to be one of the most gruesomely terrifying movies ever made—and when you leave the theatre you may wish you could forget the whole horrible experience. It's about a night when the dead rise and eat the living. Duane Jones is the lead; George A. Romero photographed and directed. There's no point pretending that he doesn't have talent. (Olympia; Jan. 14-15. . . . ¶ Garrick; starting Jan. 19.)

North by Northwest (1959)—Hitchcock's amusing, improbable thriller, with confused identities, mad geography, and a classic sequence—the crop-dusting airplane trying to dust Cary Grant. With Eva Marie Saint and James Mason. (St. Marks Cinema; starting Jan. 20.)

Psycho (1960)—The Hitchcock thriller with Janet Leigh getting stabbed in the shower and Anthony Perkins with a fly on his nose. (St. Marks Cinema; Jan. 17-19.)

Purple Noon (1961)—Maurice Ronet and Alain Delon as decadent Americans loafing in Italy—Ronet rich and vicious, Delon poor, amoral, and murderous. The director, René Clément, keeps this thriller (taken from Patricia Highsmith's "The Talented Mr. Ripley") in the sun-drenched-holiday style of travel posters, with homosexual hatred and envy festering. With Marie Laforêt as the shared girl friend. In French. (Thalia; Jan. 14-16. . . . ¶ Garrick; Jan. 16.)

Rider on the Rain (1970)—René Clément's thriller has a beautiful heroine called Mélancolie. The picture is as much about that state of mind as about the plot, in which she murders a rapist and dares not tell her husband. Some of the details are gentle and ironic, but there are too many mechanical thriller ploys. In French. (8th St. Playhouse; starting Jan. 19.)

Rosemary's Baby (1968)—Mia Farrow, John Cassavetes, and Ruth Gordon in a Gothic-gynecological horror film, some of it shot in the expensive brown depths of the Dakota, on Central Park West. Directed by Roman Polanski: funny, horrible, spiked with knowingness and thriller-twinges. The exiled Polanski expends a lot of seriousness on tran-

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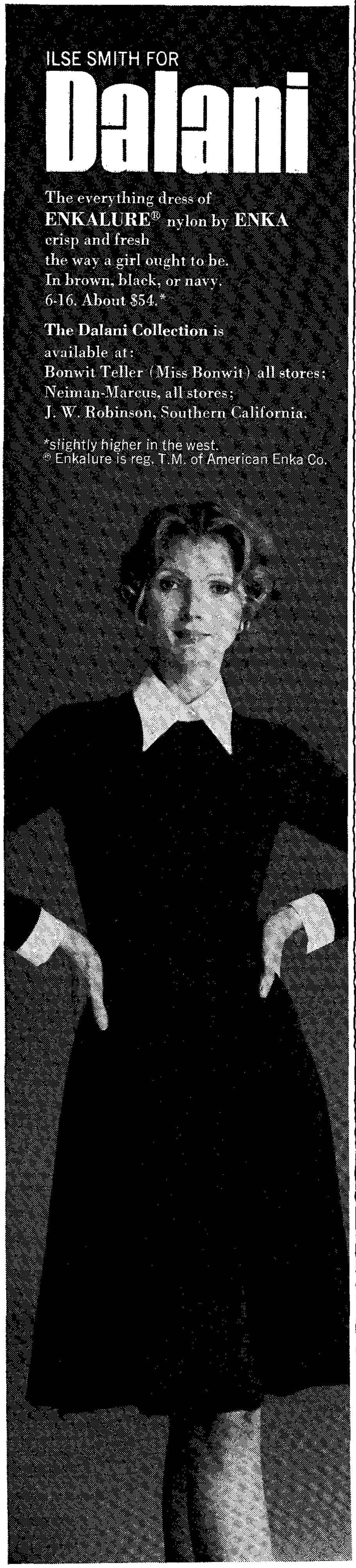
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scribing a book that is a piece of daredevil local trivia. (Olympia; Jan. 14-15.)

Saboteur (1942)—A mixed-up and overloaded American spy thriller by Alfred Hitchcock, with the unengaging Robert Cummings in the lead (and an unappealing cast featuring Priscilla Lane and Otto Kruger). Nothing holds together, but there are still enough scary sequences to make the picture entertaining. (St. Marks Cinema; Jan. 13-16.)

Shadow of a Doubt (1942)—The setting is quiet, clean, sleepy Santa Rosa, California; it is invaded by a psychopathic killer (Joseph Cotten), who comes to visit his unsuspecting and adoring relatives. Alfred Hitchcock considers this fine thriller (from a script principally by Thornton Wilder) to be his best American film, and he may be right. With Patricia Collinge, Teresa Wright, Hume Cronyn, Henry Travers. (St. Marks Cinema; Jan. 13-16.)

Shoot the Piano Player (1962)—A comedy about melancholia—probably the *only* comedy about melancholia. Charles Aznavour is Charlie the Piano Player, who just wants to be "out of it" in François Truffaut's poetic, nihilistic gangster picture. A modern classic. In French. (Elgin; Jan. 14-16.)

Something for Everyone (1970)—Nothing much for anyone, actually, in this film about the omnisexuality of a footman hero (Michael York), who sidles up to an Austrian countess (Angela Lansbury), and also to her son and to everyone else in sight. Miss Lansbury does try as best she can for high comedy. (Midtown; through Jan. 18.)

Soul to Soul—Filmed in Ghana last March during the fourteenth anniversary of the country's independence, with Wilson Pickett, Ike and Tina Turner, and other American and African performers. (Olympia; starting Jan. 19.)

Star Spangled Girl—Sandy Duncan's comic talent shines through—she has a troll-like spark of genius in her timing—and Tony Roberts' and Todd Susman's talents almost shine through, too, but the material is atrocious Neil Simon. The situations are so contrived that the wisecracks aren't funny even when they're funny. But when they're sour they're certainly sour. Directed at breakneck speed by Jerry Paris, but the picture can't go by fast enough. (Ziegfeld.)

The Straw Dogs—With Dustin Hoffman and Susan George, directed by Sam Peckinpah. (Tower East; starting Jan. 19.)

Such Good Friends—Otto Preminger is not a director who bothers much with interior emotional states, and without that, this movie is not about anything. One detects that it is meant to deal with the self-abasement of the mistreated heroine (Dyan Cannon), but Preminger plays for cheap laughs—and fails to get most of them, at that. It's a sour, crude movie, with another atrocious performance by James Coco (he's like an untalented Allen Garfield). (Baronet.)

Sunday Bloody Sunday—John Schlesinger directed this complex, remarkably modulated study of the breakup of two love affairs, from a screenplay by Penelope Gilliatt. An unusual film—perhaps a classic. With Glenda Jackson, Peter Finch, and Murray Head. (Trans-Lux East and Little Carnegie.)

Sunny (1930)—Marilyn Miller in an adaptation of her 1925 Broadway musical success; the movie retains some of the original songs by Otto Harbach, Oscar Hammerstein II, and Jerome Kern. She plays an English circus performer who becomes a stowaway on a ship going to America. Miss Miller's fabled adorableness escapes the camera, and the picture is mainly of historical interest. With Lawrence Gray as the man she loves, and O. P. Heggie as her father; directed by William A. Seiter. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; through Jan. 15.)

Suspicion (1941)—Hitchcock cast Cary Grant as a wife-killer; the studio insisted that the ending be changed. The result is a very unsatisfactory movie about a wife (Joan Fontaine) who is preposterously suspicious of her innocent husband. And since the movie is told from her point of view, it seems rather a cheat that we're being alerted to false clues. Not top-grade Hitchcock. (St. Marks Cinema; starting Jan. 20.)

Taking Off—Miloš Forman, the Czech director of "Loves of a Blonde" and "The Firemen's Ball," works for the first time in America. His subject is the generation gap, but he sees it in his own way; this is a very funny film, flying in the face of cant journalistic opinions, and gently finding that both sides in the generation war are old-fashioned, decorous, and intent on smallish endeavors carried out with a hermetic intentness and ardor possible only in a lucky, uninvaded country. (Olympia; Jan. 16-18.)

The Tattooed Swordswoman—A Japanese film. (Bijou Cinema.)

Teorema (1969)—Some people break up on lines like "You came to destroy me" and "I was living in a void," and they find Pasolini's platitudes and riddles and the Is-this-man-Christ-or-a-devil game ludicrously pretentious. Others profess to find spiritual sustenance in this movie. With Terence Stamp and Silvana Mangano. In Italian. (New Yorker; through Jan. 19.)

They Shoot Horses, Don't They? (1969)—Horace McCoy's *nineteen-thirties* novel about the Hollywood extras who enter a marathon dance, here turned into another savage nightmare of American life. Jane Fonda gives a good, strong performance, and Sydney Pollack's direction keeps the nightmare lively. (St. Marks Cinema; Jan. 12.)

Thousands Cheer (1943)—Gene Kelly tries hard in this all-star M-G-M musical, and Lena Horne sings "Honeysuckle Rose," but nothing could save it. Maybe José Iturbi put the seal of doom (i.e., mediocrity) on the venture when he condescended to play boogie-woogie; his boogie-woogie is surely the worst ever recorded. With Judy Garland, Ben Blue, Eleanor Powell, Lucille Ball, Red Skelton, and many others. George Sidney directed. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; through Jan. 15.)

THX 1138—A psychedelic view of the horrors of the computerized twenty-fifth century (which turns out to be an abstract version of "1984"). The compulsorily drugged characters are shaven-headed, wear white, and are photographed against white; the effect is both gloomy and blinding. Maggie McOmie and anxious-eyed Robert Duvall are the lovers; Donald Pleasence is the nasty, as usual. Some talent but too much "art." Movie addicts may enjoy ticking up the homages or steals—Cocteau's "Orpheus," Dreyer's "The Passion of Joan of Arc," and so on. (8th St. Playhouse; through Jan. 18.)

To Die in Madrid (1965)—A documentary about the Spanish Civil War, compiled by Frédéric Rossif. Fancy, highly emotional, and not as informative as it might be, but some of the footage is very fine. With an English narration. (Garrick; Jan. 15.)

To Find a Man—With Pamela Sue Martin and Darren O'Connor, directed by Buzz Kulik. (Columbia II; starting Jan. 20.)

Together—With Marilyn Briggs and Maureen Cousins, directed by Sean Cunningham. (34th St. East, R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2, R.K.O. 23rd St. Cinema, and Symphony; starting Jan. 19.)

El Topo—Bloody head movie. Directed by, and with, Alexandro Jodorowsky. (Coronet.)

Two-Lane Blacktop—Failed attempt at an "Easy Rider" on four wheels. The most fully characterized figure in the cast is a souped-up Chevy that endearingly seems to be made out of a lot of kitchen utensils. Mindless stuff. (Olympia; Jan. 16-18.)

Utamaro and His Five Women (1946)—A Japanese film, directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. (New Yorker; through Jan. 19.)

Vampire Doll—A Japanese film. (Bijou Cinema.)

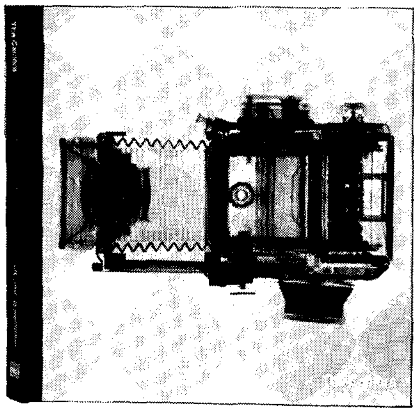
The Wild Child (1970)—François Truffaut's film, set in the late seventeen-nineties, about a doctor (played by Truffaut himself) who grows passionately interested in teaching human skills to a boy who has spent eight or nine years learning to live like an animal in the forest. The picture is precise, moving, elegantly speculative. In French. (Elgin; through Jan. 13.)

The World of Apu (1959)—Satyajit Ray's protagonist, Apu, whose consciousness developed from the village life of "Pather Panchali" and the university in "Aparajito," marries the exquisite Sharmila Tagore and grows beyond self-consciousness. Rich and contemplative, and a great, convincing affirmation. In Bengali. (Thalia; through Jan. 13.)

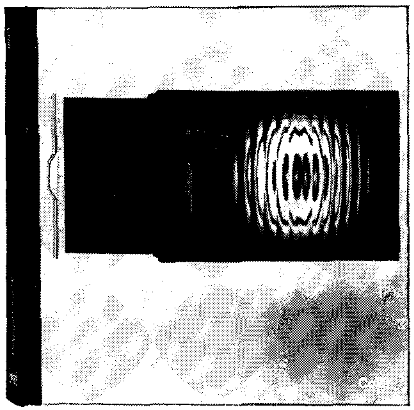
WR—Mysteries of the Organism—A Yugoslavian film, directed by Dusan Makavejev. (5th Ave. Cinema.)

Z (1969)—How a political murder is made to look like an accident. Costa-Gavras's extraordinary thriller is based on recent Greek history. With Yves Montand, Jean-Louis Trintignant, and Irene Papas. In French. (St. Marks Cinema; Jan. 12.)

There is a paradox about photography...



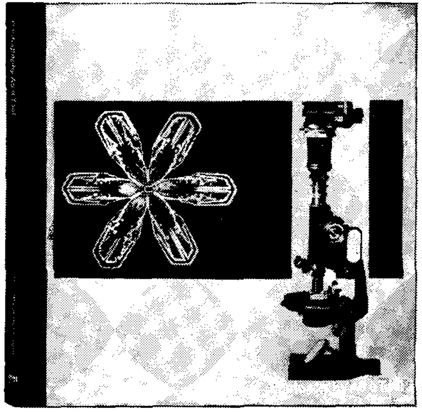
The Camera



Color

The Print

The Great Themes



Photography as a Tool

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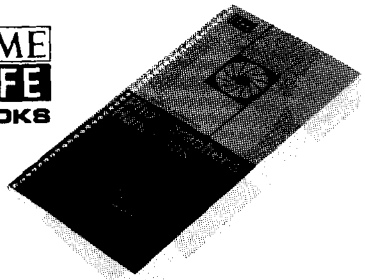

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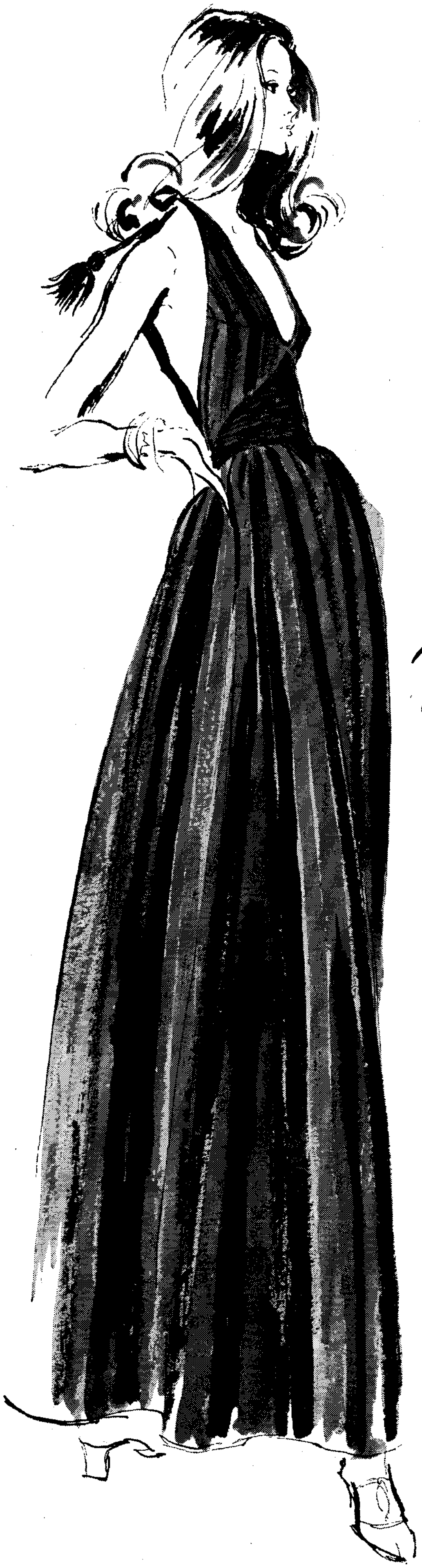
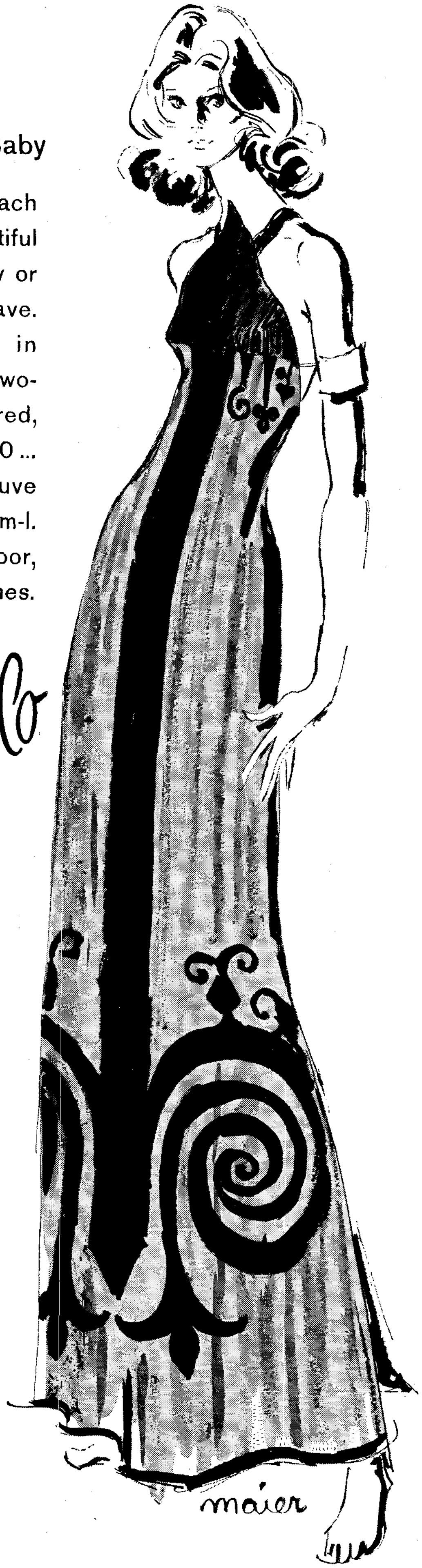


Bare Your Back, Baby

Be seen on the beach scene with your beautiful back showing . . . day or night. It's the look to have. These super-stripes in wonderfully textured woven cotton ... left, red, blue and purple, 40.00 ... right, red, pink, mauve pastels, 36.00. Both s-m-l. Beach Shop, third floor, Fifth Ave. and branches.

B Altman & Co

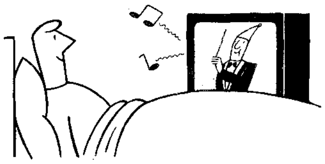


THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

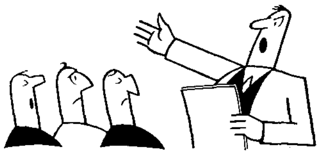
WE found ourself, not too unhappily, in bed with the flu on New Year's Eve, and, in the devil-may-care mood of the semi-helpless and against the gentle downward tug of pills, we kept ourself awake and watched Guy Lombardo. The years, perhaps because he has ushered so many of them in, have been kind to him. To this trumpery sacrament he still brings a priestly confidence; the bobbing bald or paper-behatted heads in the Waldorf-Astoria, the jelly-bean mob in Times Square, the nervous floodlights, the tensely celebrating faces still sway to his wand; the sweetest music this side of Heaven still pours with a certain snap from the syrup pitcher; the illusion is still maintained that the passage of time is a measurable and pleasurable process. The holy moment came: Lombardo counted backward "Nine, eight, seven, six, five . . . ," the glowing ball atop the Allied Chemical Building fell, the faithful little miracle had occurred. Horns, shouting, televisual patterns and spirals, "Auld Lang Syne." Then, incredibly, the whole half-minute was repeated in instant replay. "Seven, six, five, four . . ." and the same horns silently blew and the same spirals wildly flickered, and we seemed to be being asked to inspect some nuance in the event. Had it been a quarterback sneak? A double reverse? Had something replayable indeed occurred? If not, was the second time less real than the first? Were we insane? Or was the replayer? Pondering such bottomless questions, we curled up in our small fever and fell numbly into 1972.



SCHOOLCHILDREN are often told the story of how President Lincoln scribbled the Gettysburg Address on the back of an envelope as he rode to Gettysburg on a train. The other day, the *Times* ran an account of a politician of our day preparing a speech—Senator Muskie, preparing the announcement of his candidacy:

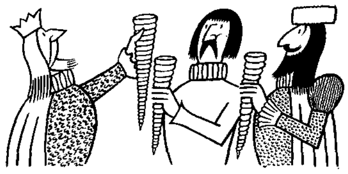
> Mr. Muskie was closeted with advisers as he tried to figure out what to tell the American electorate about his quest for the Presidency. He had three drafts, one written by his chief speechwriter, Robert Shrum, a second submitted by Milton Gwertzman, a Washington lawyer and sometime supporter of Senator Edward M. Kennedy, and a third by John Bartlow Martin, who was a friend of President Kennedy. Senator Muskie was trying to piece together a declaration from all three drafts, adding his own thoughts. . . .

It used to be that speechmaking was subject to a mysterious chemistry all its own. At best, if the right man spoke to the right audience at the right time and in the right place, he could do what Lincoln did at Gettysburg. At worst, the wrong man at the wrong time and in the wrong place could turn an audience, or a whole nation, into a mob, as Hitler did. But whatever this odd, invaluable, dangerous chemistry was, it has evaporated today. Political speeches are neither elevating nor demagogic; they are dead. Even when politicians take sharply opposing stands on issues, the quality of language and thought on both sides has a staleness that makes the charges and the counter-charges seem part of a single, colorless flow issuing from a common source. The mechanization of speechmaking has come close to destroying the point of making speeches. Taping and recording and the endless repetition of speeches have certainly destroyed any sense of occasion. Television, radio, and amplifiers may make the speaker available to a wider audience, but they also intervene between the speaker and his audience. And the speech-writers intervene between the speaker and his own thoughts. Too many people have got into the act. It seems most unlikely that we're going to find the right man at the right time in the right place between now and November 7th; it will be more a matter of nobody talking to no one about nothing.



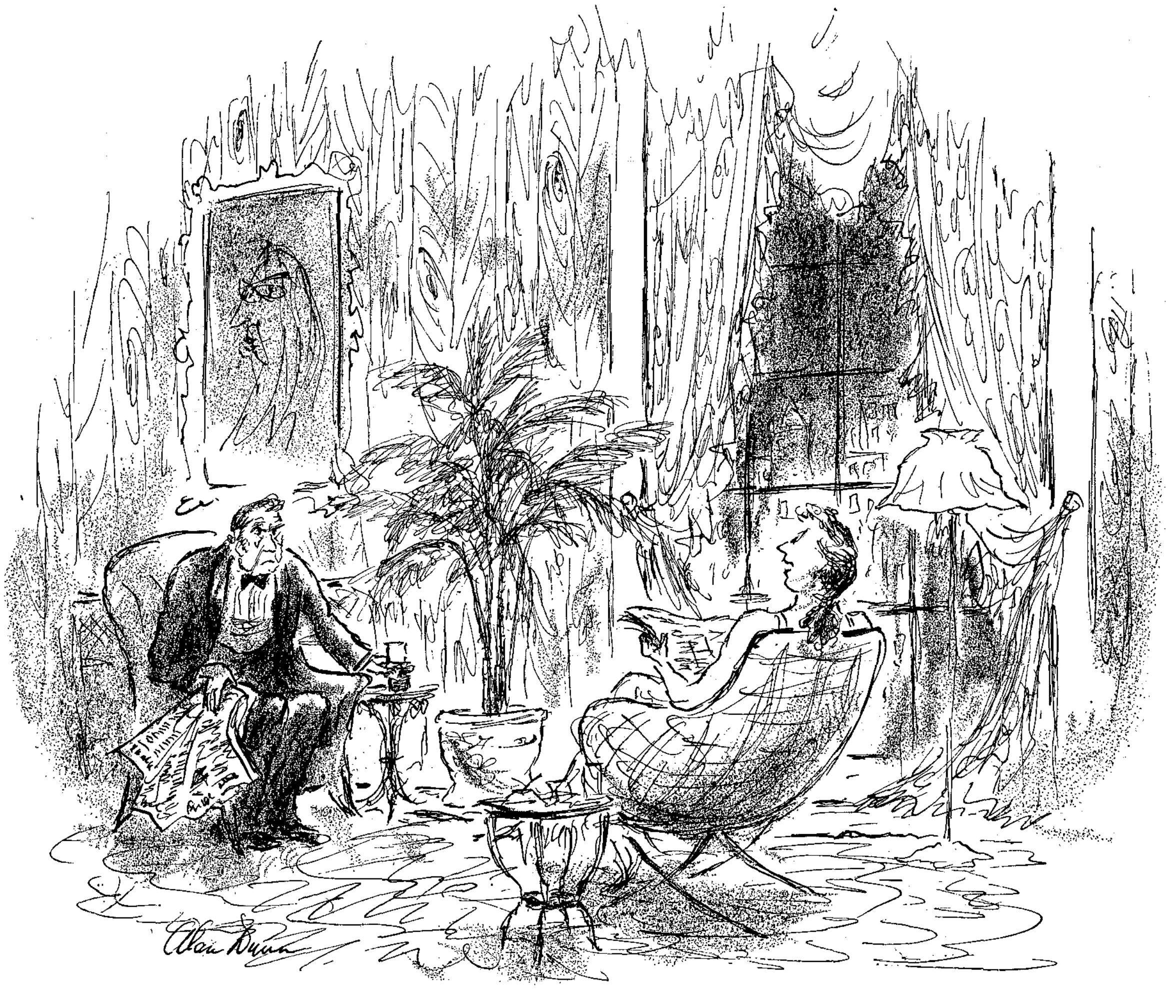
The Real Unicorn

NARWHALS are Arctic sea mammals, the largest of which grow to be twenty feet long. The male narwhal has a slender, tapering tusk—or sometimes two tusks—projecting straight out from his upper jaw, and during the credulous Middle Ages kings and other celebrities used to like to drink from cups made of narwhal ivory, in the belief that it was unicorn horn and that its magical properties would instantly disclose whether the draught contained poison. If you have not seen a narwhal tusk recently, we suggest that you hie right over to the Cordier & Ekstrom Gallery, at 980 Madison Avenue, where the second-longest one in captivity is now on view.



The occasion for displaying this magnificent object is the gallery's annual "theme" show, which happens this year to be on the subject of imaginary beasts. "I wanted a unicorn horn," Arne Ekstrom, the gallery's owner and director, told us when we went to the opening, "but, after all, I couldn't go out and steal a tapestry from the Cluny Museum or The Cloisters, and so it occurred to me to use the real thing. It came from an art dealer in Paris, it is eight and a half feet long, and I am informed that the only longer one is in a museum in Oslo. Isn't it fantastic?"

Mr. Ekstrom, a slender, tapering



"If you really can't cope, how about Disney World until Phase Two blows over?"

man who comes originally from Sweden, has had a theme show at his gallery every year since 1966, and each one has attracted favorable attention; one critic, in fact, remarked that last winter's version, entitled "She" and devoted to the varying concepts of the feminine mystique from 5000 B.C. to the present, was the most brilliant exhibition of the season. Among the imaginary beasts on view this time, we noted, were an Etruscan stone sphinx of the sixth century B.C.; an Indian lion, also stone, dated "IVth-VIIth Century A.D.;" an extremely disconcerting African fetish from Mali, made (Mr. Ekstrom declared) "of blood and mud;" a Dubuffet cow ("The best of all Dubuffet cows, a monumental cow," Ekstrom said); Noguchi's "Strange Bird," in green slate; and one of Nancy Grossman's sculptures of a human head encased in leather—in this case, being engorged by a feral leather beak. The vividly contrasting nature of these objects, accentuated by their placement and lighting, piqued our curiosity as well as our somewhat nervous admiration, and when Mr. Ekstrom could manage a moment away from his well-wishers we asked him how a dealer in contemporary art goes about acquiring such things.

"I simply start out with the idea that I'm going to be lucky," he told us. "This year, you see, I decided to have a bestiary, and then, to make it a little more difficult for myself, I thought I would make it imaginary animals, with the man-into-beast, beast-into-man metamorphosis as a kind of secondary theme. Last August, I went to Europe and began visiting galleries in London, Paris, Zurich, and other cities. I was sure the right things would turn up, and they did. Several people suggested that I get Borges to write the catalogue essay, because of his 'Book of Imaginary Beings.' I thought that seemed a little too obvious, so I asked my friend Octavio Paz instead, and again I was lucky. He agreed, and I am very proud to be publishing his text."

Had Mr. Ekstrom decided yet on next year's theme? He had. "I'm going to have a sort of echo show," he informed us. "An object of, say, the eleventh century next to a Brancusi that somehow reflects it; a twelfth-century Peruvian grave figure alongside a Dubuffet. The unconscious echoes across continents and centuries. My theme shows are really very modest undertakings, you must understand. There is no great scholarship involved, and no great expenditure of funds. Incidentally, an amusing thing happened in connection with my 1969 show, which was called 'Blocked Metaphors.' In preparation for that one, I got a lot of wooden hat forms from Alfonso Ossorio, who has hundreds of them, in all shapes and sizes, and I gave them to a number of artists, who agreed to turn them into sculptures according to their own ideas. Some of the artists put very high prices on the results. Andy Warhol had not let us know what he was charging, so I telephoned him to ask. He thought about it for a second, and said 'Two cents.' I told him that this presented insurmountable difficulties, because we would have to give his dealer, Leo Castelli, his commission, and I didn't know how to split two cents three ways. So Andy said he would make it three cents. I bought his sculpture myself, and sent Castelli a check for one cent, and later I learned that a collector had asked to buy the cancelled check."

Lost

ALL our life, we've been reading the ads in the lost-and-found column of the *Times* with the frustrating realization that half the story of each lost object—and almost certainly the more interesting half—would remain unknown to us. Determined to discover, for once, whether the things that get lost get found, and where, how, and by whom, we picked a day at random recently—it was a Monday—and phoned all the people who had placed ads seeking missing possessions. As it happened, seven items were being sought that day: an attaché case, two pieces of jewelry, and four dogs.

Our first call was to the erstwhile owner of a "gray Samsonite attaché case, L.I.R.R. ticket office, Thursday at 6 P.M. Reward," who proved to be a lawyer. His attaché case had not turned up. "I put it down on the floor next to me while I was buying a ticket to go home to Long Island," he told us. "I missed it five minutes later on the train. The train hadn't pulled out of the station, so I got right off, went back to the ticket window, couldn't find it, and then went to the station's lost-and-found department. Nothing doing. The attaché case contained about ten hours' worth of paperwork I'd done and a forty-dollar beep-signal device that was part of my office answering service. The attaché case was an old one, probably worth about thirty dollars. I don't care about the case or the beeper, but I'd like to get the papers back. Until now, no one has phoned me as a result of the ad."

The husband of the former owner of a "Lady's 18k gold Vacheron Constantine watch Lost between 5 Ave & 65 St & Madison Ave & 62 St Thurs approx 12:30 P.M. Reward" said that the watch hadn't been recovered and that he had had only one call in response to his ad—from a *Post* employee, who suggested that he run a similar ad in the *Post*. "My wife's watch was very attractive," the placer of the ad, a stockbroker, told us. "It had a tiny face, half the size of a pinky, set into a gold band, kept good time, and was appraised for a thousand dollars. As we were waiting to cross Fifth Avenue and Sixty-fifth, my wife looked at the watch to check the time, and when we got to Madison and Sixty-second, she realized it was no longer on her wrist. We immediately retraced our steps. Unless one is consciously looking down, one has no idea just how littered the streets are; we were constantly turning over old newspapers, envelopes, and gum wrappers. Our search was in vain. I put the ad in the *Times* because a relative of mine had once found a diamond pin outside a restaurant and had returned the pin after its owner advertised for it in the *Times*, but I didn't really expect to get the watch back. It would have seemed too good to be true. I have insurance, so I never have to worry about these things; when I buy insurance, I'm buying peace of mind. The insurance company will reimburse us for the watch's appraised value. I'm going to buy the same watch again for my wife, only I'm going to have a safety catch put on the new one."

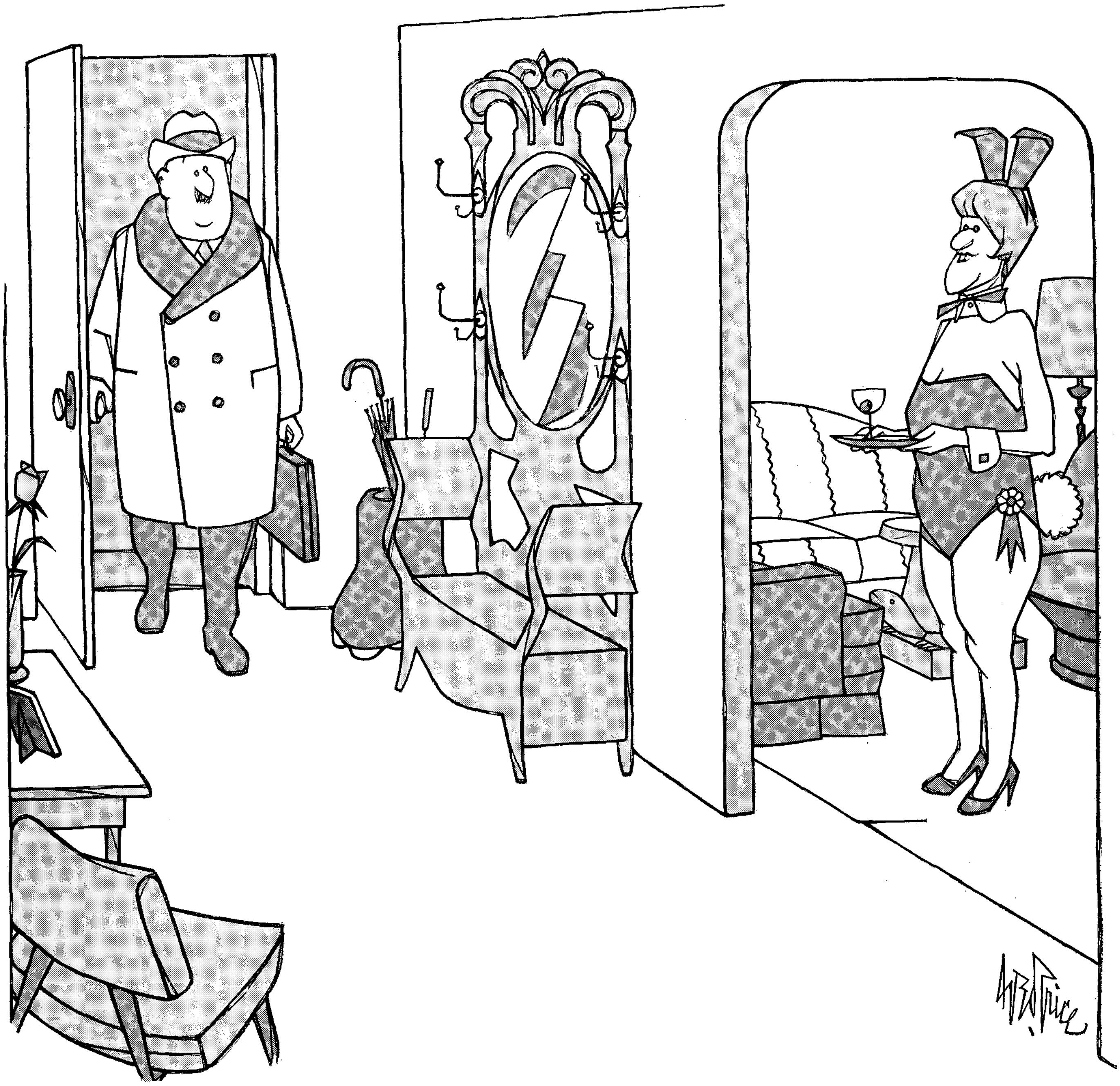
The quondam owner of the "Cluster of diamonds set in gold (part of ladies ring) lost Fri AM, E. Side bet 30th & 72 St Reward" turned out to be a divorced woman who works in a wholesale house that sells junior sportswear. She had been even less fortunate. Not only had her jewelry not been returned but it had not been insured ("The insurance was too expensive for me"), and it had had great sentimental value in addition to a monetary value of about a thousand dollars. "When my mother died, in 1966, she left me her diamond ring," this woman said. "I had my mother's solitaire, which was almost a carat, taken out of its old setting and reset in a spray of smaller diamonds. The whole center of the ring—the solitaire and the spray—must have loosened and fallen out. I think I lost it between my apartment, on East Thirtieth Street, and my doctor's office, on East Seventy-second, but I didn't notice that I had only the ring setting on my finger until I arrived at work, so I may have lost it in the subway between the doctor's and the garment center. I went straight home, praying that the spray had fallen out in my apartment. Then I retraced some of my steps and phoned the doctor. Some time ago, I found a wallet, and I was honest enough to call the person it belonged to and return it. I hoped someone honest would find my diamond spray, and I put an ad in the *Times*, so the finder would know whose it was. I still keep hoping the diamond will show up in the apartment; whenever I get home, I look in another corner. I try not to think about the diamond, and I've put the setting way in the back of a drawer, but I can't get it out of my mind. I guess it's because it was my mother's that I have such an empty feeling inside about it."

Of the four people whose dogs had strayed, the first one we spoke to—in this case the strayer was a "Male Bloodhound—Upper West Side Reward"—had fared no better than the ex-possessors of the attaché case, the watch, and the diamond spray. On the previous Saturday, at 1 A.M., the bloodhound's owner, an Iranian Ph.D. student at Columbia, who works part-time for the Iranian Mission to the United Nations, was out walking in Riverside Park at Eighty-fourth Street with his girl friend and with his bloodhound, Russ ("It's short for Russet. He came with that name"), and a beagle he also owns. Both dogs were off the leash, frisking. "Being a bloodhound, Russ tends to wander," the student told us. "Suddenly, he spotted a car going uptown on the West Side Highway and took off after it at full speed. Leaving the beagle with my girl friend,

I chased Russ for ten blocks, after which my legs gave out. Then I called the police—and what an ordeal it is in New York to find a phone booth that works and a courteous telephone operator—but they hadn't found Russ. I hunted for him under the highway, along the river, and in the park until 4 A.M. During the following week, I called the A.S.P.C.A. and Bide-A-Wee and kept in touch with the police and also with the Sanitation Department—if Russ had been killed on the highway, they would have been the ones to find his body and to have a record of it. I put notices up in my neighborhood—some of which were torn down, apparently by people who don't care for dogs—and placed ads in the *Times* and the Columbia *Spectator*. A sympathetic lady saw my ad and phoned me with some helpful suggestions. She advised me to dial Area Code 201 and then LOST PET; I did, and reached an outfit that coördinates searches for lost animals. I'd heard that there were some wild-dog packs in the city, so I took a day off from my job, rented a bicycle, and pedalled around Central Park and Morningside Heights. I couldn't get very close to the wild dogs, but I heard them barking. I looked at them through my binoculars, and I could see that Russ wasn't with them. By now, I've just about given up on finding him. I bought Russ for two hundred dollars six months ago, when he was a beautiful but wild one-year-old with an impressive pedigree. I went through obedience training with him, and he improved. Still, he was very high-strung, and I had been thinking of giving him away to someone who lived in the country, but I wanted to choose a good home for him, not lose him this way. I wish I could be sure he's O.K. The uncertainty of it all is what's painful. If I'd lost Russ in England, where I was brought up, I think I would have found him. The English police have more time to help you, and people care much more about animals there. I'll admit that if you lost a dog in Iran, you probably wouldn't see him again. Many people throw stones at them, and, of course, poor Iranians aren't sympathetic when upper-class Iranians lose a dog that has been fed chicken while they are hungry themselves."

When we reached the person who had advertised the loss of "ONE Apricot Poodle small miniature. Vicinity of Irving Place. REWARD," we finally had a story with a happy ending. En route to the happy ending, however, the poodle's owner, a woman who lives on Gramercy Park and teaches school in Leonia, New Jersey, had had an unpleasant encounter with its finder, whom she suspects of being a dognapper. On Friday evening, the teacher, her date, and the poodle, a four-year-old female named Lady, went to Pete's Tavern. The loop of Lady's leash was secured to the bottom rung of her mistress's chair, but somehow Lady got away; her absence was discovered at Pete's in the early morning of the next day. The schoolteacher searched the restaurant and the surrounding area until 5 A.M.—"calling 'Lady! Lady! Lady!' and feeling like an idiot"—and then reported Lady's disappearance to the police. Later that Saturday, she called the *Times* to place an ad in Monday's paper, and, feeling lonesome for her pet, which she had acquired as a puppy, she went to Gimbels and bought a three-hundred-and-fifteen-dollar replacement—a Yorkshire terrier, which she named Little One. The next day, her phone rang. It was a man who claimed he was calling on behalf of a man who had found Lady, to ask what kind of reward she was willing to pay for the dog's safe return. (The ad had included only a box number, so she presumed that the man had been given her phone number by someone at Pete's Tavern, where she was a regular customer.) She said she would pay twenty-five dollars. The man said he'd talk to his friend and call back. He did, and said that twenty-five dollars wasn't sufficient—that the man wanted a hundred, and if he didn't get it, he would kill Lady. "I think all I had the presence of mind to reply at that point was 'I want my dog back,' " the schoolteacher told us. "I gave him my name and address. On Monday, the man who had phoned—I recognized him by his voice—came up to my apartment with Lady. He was in his late thirties or early forties, about five feet ten, burly, with dark hair and a swarthy complexion. I told him that I had only sixty dollars in the house. That was the truth. I said I'd get forty more, and asked him to return for it on Tuesday. He gave me Lady, and, of course, I knew he wasn't an intermediary when he said to her, 'Oh, I was so good to you. I fed you so well.' Lady was in fine shape. She was happy to see me, and didn't even growl at Little One, although when Little One tried to play with her, Lady sort of ignored her. Don't ask me how I could have been foolish enough to let the man come up to my apartment when I was there all alone, or what I'd have done if he had said he wouldn't hand over the dog until I paid him the forty dollars, too, and don't ask me why I was silly enough to go out and buy a Yorkie in such haste. I guess I just assumed I'd never see Lady again. I still can't believe I have her back. I also can't believe I was lucky enough to be able to return the Yorkie. Livestock usually isn't returnable, but Little One turned out to have a chronic kennel cough and something congenitally wrong with her rear paws, so Gimbels took her back and gave me a refund. I was crazy about Little One, but two dogs would have been too much for me. By the way, the man had the gall to phone me on Tuesday about the additional forty dollars. By then, I'd told the police what had happened, and they were interested, because extortion was involved, so two detectives were with me. The man told me to come to Eighteenth Street and Third Avenue with the forty dollars, but when the detectives went to keep my appointment with him he wasn't there."

A second happy-ending story was told to us by a successful model and aspiring actress who placed an ad for a "LOST dog—Male Beagle 6 mos. No collar or tags. Lost Mon. 61 St & 5 Av. Reward." Her pet, whose name is Howard, was returned under less sinister circumstances. "Last Monday, some moving men were bringing furniture into my new apartment," she said. "The door was open, and Howard split. As soon as I realized he was gone, I went out looking for him and questioned every cop on the beat. One policeman had seen a woman pick Howard up a block or two from my apartment. He told me to put an ad in the *Times*, so that the woman could locate me. I decided to let the ad run for a week. Before the first ad ran—the next day, in fact—the policeman saw the woman again and told her that I was frantically looking for Howard. He advised her to read the lost-and-found column before she did anything with Howard, but she had already given Howard to a friend of a friend who lived in Ardsley and want-



ed a pet for her children. I got in touch with Howard's new family, and was told they were already fond of him. I wanted Howard back right away, but I had to fly to Los Angeles and didn't have the time to go out to Ardsley. Howard's new family would gladly have driven him into the city, but it was a Jewish holy day, and they were Orthodox Jews and couldn't drive that day. They put him in a cab, and he rode home—for seventeen dollars and fifty cents. I never worried that I wouldn't see him again after he escaped, because I was sending out real strong vibrations to get him back."

The fate of a lost "Husky, named Cinda, female, medium height, 1 yr old, black & silver. Reward" remains a mystery. When we dialled the phone number listed in the ad, the Brooklyn A.S.P.C.A. animal shelter answered. The people there had no record of a recently lost husky of that name and description. We called the Manhattan A.S.P.C.A. animal shelter; its staff knew nothing about a lost husky, either. We called the *Times* lost-and-found department and were referred to the *Times* claims department, which traced the ad for us. According to the *Times* file, a little boy who had no home telephone had placed the ad, using the Brooklyn A.S.P.C.A.'s phone number, with the A.S.P.C.A.'s consent. The *Times* could not give us the boy's name. We called the Brooklyn A.S.P.C.A. again and gave them the information we had acquired. They were sorry, they still knew nothing about a lost husky. We can only hope that Cinda, with or without benefit of newspaper ads and A.S.P.C.A.s, has found her way home.

Ms.

A LADY we know was browsing recently in the Mato Grosso of a West Side paperback bookstore, hunting for a particular novel by Evelyn Waugh. She couldn't find it, or any other book by Evelyn Waugh, though there were three books by Alec Waugh. At last, she managed to buttonhole one of those swarthy, wraithlike young men who always seem to be paperback-bookstore clerks, and asked him why there were three titles in stock by Alec Waugh and none by Evelyn Waugh. "Because the people who own this place are male-chauvinist pigs," the clerk said.

AROUND THE BEND IN EIGHTY DAYS

III—THE TURKEY TROT: ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK

THE very embodiment of Barbarella, Daisy Mae, and Modesty Blaise, she stood there atop the Spanish Steps in Rome that frosty March morning, as heedless of the arctic blast sweeping the Piazza di Spagna as though it were a zephyr—Sally-Lou Claypool, handmaiden of my lightning peregrination of the globe. It was a magnificent sight. And to the *vitelloni, paparazzi,* and other layabouts transfixed by her dazzling smile, Sally-Lou's shorts, Roman-legionary boots, and halter embossed with the masks of Comedy and Tragedy were exactly what they expected of unfettered American girlhood. Their awed exhalations made little jets of steam in the air. "*Sontuoso! Provocante di saliva*—mouth-watering!" they said. "This graybeard, *evidentemente,* must be her father." One bolder than the rest sidled up to me, touching his cap. "*Scusi, Signore,*" he apologized. "I run a small export business to South America. Is the lady for sale?" For an instant, the rogue's impertinence tempted me to box his ears, but since they were obscured by a luxuriant growth of hair, I had no time to hunt for them. Uppermost in my mind was the obligation to adhere to Phileas Fogg's schedule, and thus far we had done so slavishly, employing the very same transport. In record time, we had breasted the Alps—indeed, surpassed them, if the reaction of fellow-passengers on the *wagon-lit* was indicative; jiggling and swaying, we had whirled through the Mont Cenis tunnel down the boot of Italy, and now, within a few hours, we would embark at Naples on the M/V Bellezza Turca for the Golden Horn. I was, in fact, discoursing on the vanished glory of the Ottomans as Sally-Lou and I proceeded toward the Via Veneto to join some friends for an apéritif.

Sally-Lou's eyes misted over reminiscently. "Wow, do they turn me on—do they ever!" she said, sighing.

"What?" I asked, perplexed.

"Ottomans," she said. "This Turkish boy had one in his room at Tulane when I was taking home economics."

At Doney's, thickly crowded with its usual mélange of tourists and bunco artists, Earl Griggs and his Italian wife, Lucia, bade us a heartwarming welcome. A bit too effusive, almost; Griggs, an ebullient press agent turned movie producer, was deeply concerned lest Sally-Lou catch cold, and, commandeering his wife's stole, insisted on tucking it around her. None of his by-play escaped Lucia, whose face paled with such jealousy that I was afraid she might plunge a hatpin into his *gedcirim.* As it turned out, the means were not far at hand, for Griggs shortly produced a slender bamboo walking stick from under his chair.

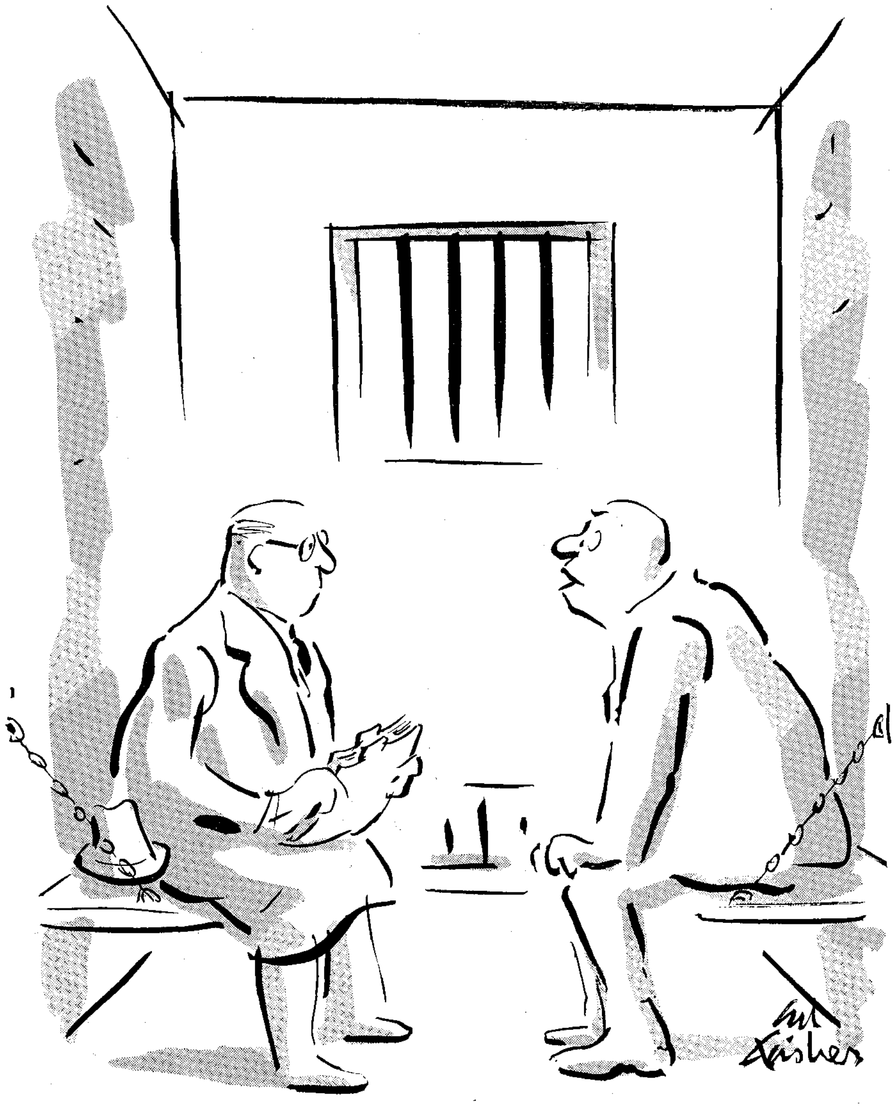
"You got any kind of protection on this trip of yours?" Griggs demanded.

I replied that I had an insurance floater and a St. Christopher's medal.

"Child's play," he snorted. "What happens if you run into a Burmese dacoit, or that Thuggee sect out in India? Now, this is what we call a *bastone animato*—a sword cane." With a twist of the handle, he unsheathed a gleaming, handsomely chased blade inscribed with the legend "*Non ti fidar di me se il cor ti manca.*" "That means 'Put not your trust in me if your heart is faint,' " he explained. "It's all yours, Marco Polo. Wear it in the best of health."

Flourishing the cane in the streets of Naples the next morning, I found it to be a real boon; I could slash irritably at cars threatening to run me down, beat off importunate shoeshine boys, and generally designate myself a *cavaliere inglese* who brooked no nonsense.

THE Bellezza Turca was a small five-thousand-ton vessel out of Genoa, calling in at Piraeus, Izmir, Istanbul, and Venice. She carried mainly cruise passengers—stiff, poisonous Prussians of the kind George Grosz impaled with his pen, dusty French bank managers fiddling with their pince-nez and little change purses. Their wives were as typical; evenly divided between fat *Hausfrauen* and beady-eyed spiders, they sat in the midship lounge endlessly crocheting doilies and gossiping to Chopin rendered by a wild-haired trio. Our presence gave them something to gossip about. When-



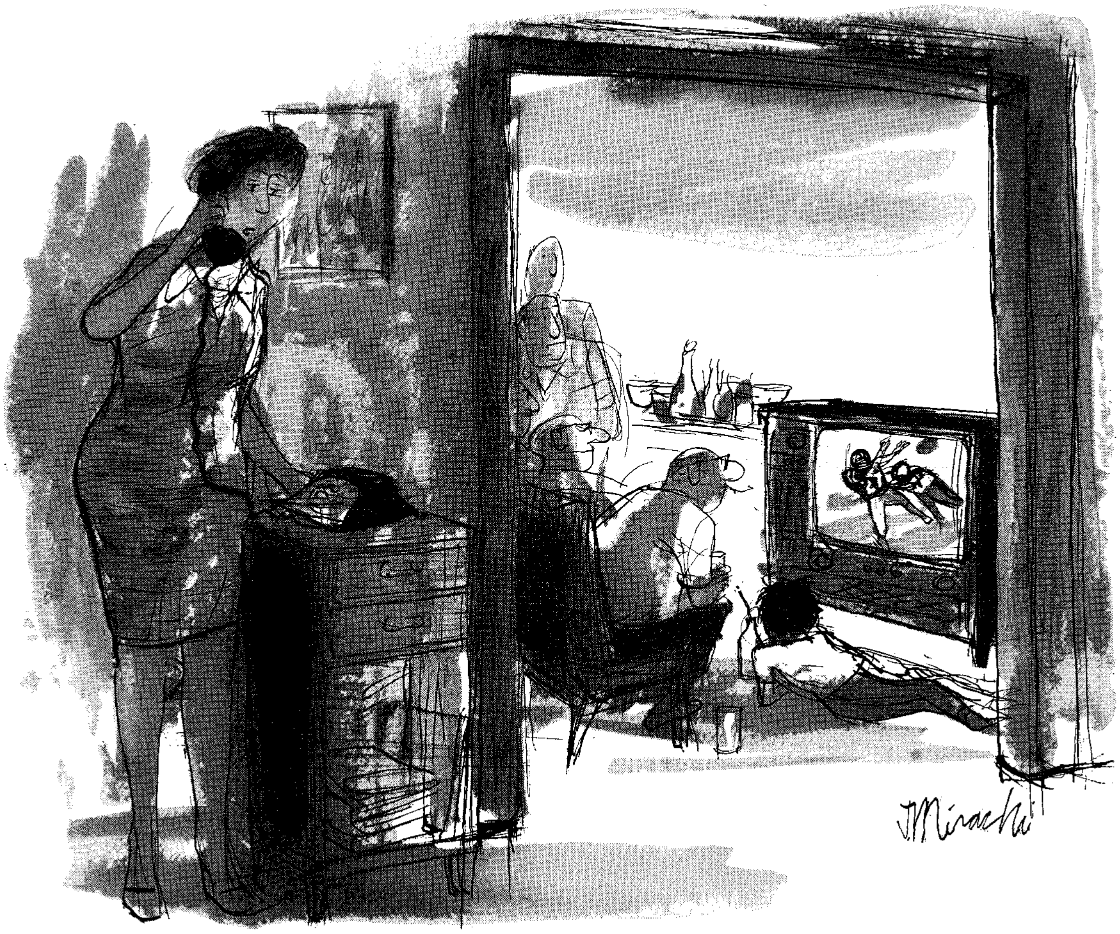
"Where's all that prejudicial pre-trial publicity you promised me?"

ever Sally-Lou sashayed past, usually trailed by several young officers, the ladies would freeze in their chairs.

"*Dégoûtant*," they said to each other. "*Schrecklich!* Why does not the captain interfere?"

The captain had his own problems, as it happened. The voyage was a stormy one, and, for a man with a skinful of ouzo, steering the craft through the Strait of Messina and the Cyclades was like trying to pressure a pinball machine. I rewrote my will twice the night we bumped through the Corinth Canal, figuring that by breakfast I would be sacked out with Phlebas the Phoenician among the sea anemones and the amphorae.

Once in calmer waters, bingo and similar tedium prevailed aboard, and I sought to while the time away as Fogg had throughout his journey—at the card table. The night before our arrival, failing to scare up any pigeons, I laid out a game of solitaire in the lounge and smiled invitingly at passersby. Nobody gave me a tumble, but eventually an elderly Frenchman wearing a beret and clearly afflicted with palsy drew near. Excusing himself for his inadequate English, he suggested we play piquet, bezique, or the like for a few sous a point. Touched by the old chap's frailty and Old World charm, I assented. Apparently, the pastime had a beneficial effect on his ailment, for he very soon ceased quaking. *Par hasard*, he asked, did I know a game he had learned at the lycée called Noir-Jean, or blackjack? More to humor him than anything else, I offered to let him teach me, whereupon quite unexpectedly, he produced a green eyeshade and rolled up his sleeves.



"McNally residence. I'm sorry, no calls accepted until half time."

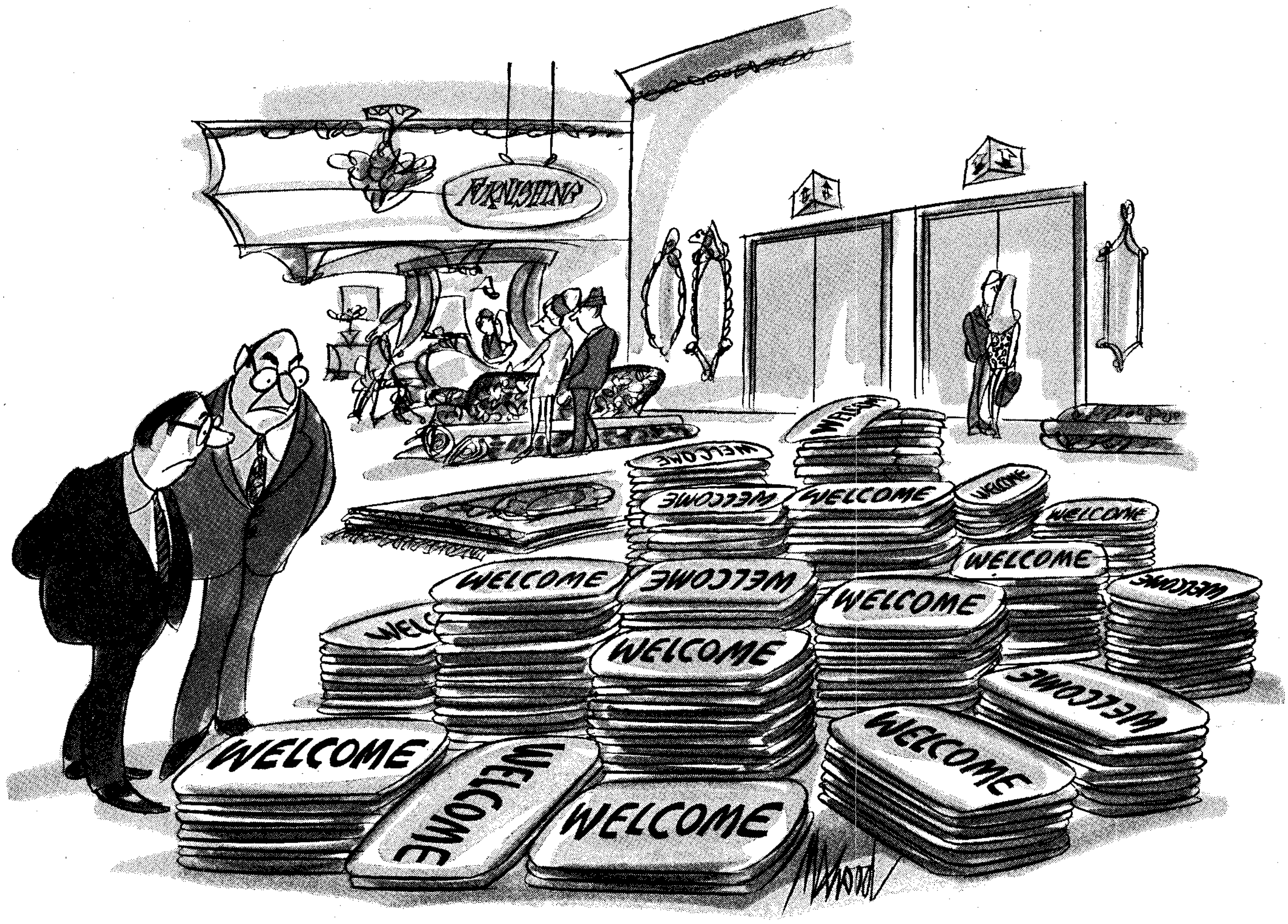
• •

At 5 A.M., I tottered out on deck and dropped over the side a leatherette folder that had once contained express checks. From the haze shrouding the Sea of Marmara, the spires of Istanbul's mosques were just emerging, and, from my own personal haze, so was the realization that I had been cleaned like a spring chicken (*nettoyé comme un poulet de printemps*). I kept an eye peeled for my seducer in the bustle of debarkation, but by then he had undoubtedly changed his makeup. And when, somewhat later in Kuwait, I heard that Chicago Eddie LaFong, that king of thimbleriggers, had been working the Near East, I understood why I had been suckered.

WITH only eleven hours' leeway before catching the night express to Erzurum, there was barely time for me to discharge a couple of essential errands, so, manacling Sally-Lou to a lamppost in the Istiklal Caddesi, I plunged into the hurly-burly of Istanbul. My first objective was the Topkapi museum, to ascertain whether a person suspended by his ankles could really abstract a jewelled dagger from a showcase, as portrayed in the movie of that name. Three guards I interrogated deemed the exploit sheer flapdoodle, assuring me that their feet were like two blocks of ice at all times. An assistant curator, who was selling halvah from a tray in the forecourt, corroborated their opinion. "Stealing with the hands, yes," he acknowledged. "We do it all the time. But hanging upside down from the feet? It's a *bubba-meiseh*—mine are like two blocks of ice the whole time." The revelation would have made a sensational news story, but rather than disgrace Eric Ambler, who had conceived the idea originally, I chose to remain silent.

My second mission involved the fulfillment of a lifelong dream. Ever since 1925, when I first saw mention of it in Aldous Huxley's "The Tillotson Banquet," I had coveted a Levantine decoration known as the Turkish Order of Chastity, Second Class. Now that I was based in London, I felt that this insignia would vastly increase my social standing, opening doors to salons and other chambers previously denied me. Much to my elation, I was able to track one down in the recesses of the Grand Bazaar—well worth the sixty-seven quid I shelled out for it.

When the midnight choo-choo left for Erzurum, it already bore one disenchanted customer. Mr. Honeyball's sales pitch in London had led me to expect a version of the Orient Express, full of mysterious veiled charmers redolent of patchouli, and double and possibly triple agents in black monocles smoking endless Sobranies. In the



"I'm afraid we're swimming against the tide. If they said 'Get Lost' or 'Drop Dead' or something, they'd go like hot cakes."

• •

event, it proved to be a slow train through Arkansas, bulging with country folk and their turbulent possessions, and a miasma of hippies bound for Afghanistan. As calisthenics, two nights and days of jolting across the Turkish hinterland by rail were doubtless beneficial to the tripes; as tourism, they were an ordeal. The train crept through snowy mountain defiles at a snail's pace, pausing every few seconds at villages whose only resource seemed to be the unquenchable gaiety of children capering along the tracks. The poverty everywhere was appalling, the incidence of soldiers and fortifications sinister. Considering that a military coup was in progress, as we heard later, everything was as quiet as the grave, and equally sombre. Even more so, though, was the weather; the farther east we went, the more prevalent the snow became—a disquieting portent, for at Erzurum a car was scheduled to ferry us through the mountain passes into Iran, and one day's delay could cause us to miss our vital steamer connection beyond at Kuwait. Altogether, the situation was not conducive to optimism, nor was the train cuisine, a cheerless mixture of goat cheese, leathery Wiener schnitzel, and bread resembling Michigan peat moss. My companion, lost in dreams of the hush puppies and fatback she had been reared on along Mississippi's Gulf Coast, began to weave alarming fantasies. "Do you know what I'd like this minute?" she queried as we gnawed away at our schnitzels the last night. "A couple of shots of bourbon and a big platter of chicken swimming in gravy, with beaten biscuits, hominy grits, and a side order of black-eyed peas. Then I'd cut me a huge chunk of pecan pie and stretch out in the hammock . . ."

HEAVY snow blanketed Erzurum the next morning, and the sky was leaden with the promise of more. My heart sank when I queried the hotel staff about the state of the overland route southward into Iran. Other than a jeep and a badly battered lorry, no vehicles had come through from Tabriz in four days; their occupants reported apocalyptic drifts, buses and cars and camions snarled in blizzards still raging. Under different circumstances, one could have waited for the roads to clear, but time was now our enemy—unless we reached the Persian Gulf pronto, the British Mideast liner S.S. Choleria would sail without us, knocking our forward arrangements into a cocked hat. A decision was imperative, and once again the hoary precept that there is more than one way to skin a cat was demonstrated to be hogwash. I squared my chin (insofar as nature would permit) and ordered our driver to fetch us at daylight.

Midway through the First World War, at the age of thirteen, I wrote an essay that won first prize in a contest sponsored by a magazine called the *American Boy*. It was entitled "Grit," and it extolled the valor of those taxi-drivers who had stemmed the Prussian horde at the Marne. Grit, I explained, was raw courage in the face of overwhelming odds, fortitude under well-nigh unbearable pressure—in a word, pluck. Had anyone scraped away the snow from a black sedan stalled in the mountains of eastern Turkey some five decades later, he would have seen a man fresh out of pluck. Whatever illusions I had previously entertained about my durability had flown, and henceforth I was content to regard myself as a pantywaist. Nine hours of crawling up almost vertical inclines in a whirlwind of snow, teetering on the edge of chasms, and skidding down icy gorges into eternity had reduced me to the consistency of calf's-foot jelly. To Sally-Lou, on the other hand, the nightmare we were embroiled in was sheer heaven; refusing to comprehend the gravity of our plight, she whinnied with delight as our wheels spun us halfway to kingdom come. But now, with two mountain peaks unscaled between us and the Iranian border, they had ceased to spin, and our driver's prognosis was bleak in the extreme. What with traffic immobilized ahead and darkness falling, no plows would be operative until morning. Tabriz, therefore, was unattainable, as were Tehran and Khorramshahr, farther along. To spend the night in the car in such intense cold was suicidal; ergo, the only solution was to retrace our steps.

AMONG my many speculations as we drove back to Erzurum with tire chains beating out an obbligato against the fenders, one was recurrent: How would Phileas Fogg have solved this particular dilemma—or, rather, how would Jules Verne, seated in his cozy study in Amiens, have solved it for him? Genius though he was, Verne would have been stumped. And yet, so indomitable is the human spirit, so deeply ingrained the grit that stemmed the Prussian horde at the Marne, that somehow we muddled through. Thirty-six hours later, Passepartoute and I ascended the gangplank of the S.S. Choleria in Kuwait. It had taken superb logistics on my part, and a peck of money. "Goodbye, goodbye!" the baggagemen called from dockside, waving the baksheesh we had lavished on them. "May you live a thousand years and a trolley car grow in your stomach annually!" Before us stretched the Persian Gulf, most historic of waterways to India and Africa; already the spicy scent of the Middle East, compounded of open drains openly arrived at and Texas oilmen, permeated our nostrils. Ahead of us, in the little-known Trucial States and sheikhdoms bordering on the Gulf and, above all, in fabled Muscat and Oman, lay adventure unimaginable. I drew a deep breath, brushed a small, many-legged Arab off my sleeve, and went down to unpack.

—S. J. PERELMAN

(This is the third part of a six-part chronicle. The next part will appear in an early issue.)

C., AGAIN

I. (BRYN MAWR, 1961)

When your feet went always naked,
tap-tapping to the fifties rock,

it was cars leaving
for darkest America, the muscle roads, the beaches

arriving in strange wind. It froze me to your armchair,
tragic . . . and turned you elfin-angry, asking

me if, in my novel, you slept with your home-town boyfriend,
and what should one think of Castro?

You had a divorced grandmother; her drunk cousin slept too near the fire,
a dead mother in love

with Thomas Wolfe, and you liked blond boys with angry cars.
A brass cross from Provincetown, set among fan shells . . .

When your eyes widened, what spring.
Ten joints wouldn't show me

how sudden it came that year: your ordinary perfume,
the hills sinuous on our walks, the sound of rivulets

ending nowhere and nowhere, reaching the sea in the ear,
the sweet, sudden graveyard where I talked of atheism . . .

Our day is ending; we go out to the diner,
old bus chrome,

the only place you let me buy you dinner.
I call myself desperate; lift hands toward your cold-kindly face,

in the green, in the neon, the haze of too much looking,
the pure oval of an old photo—

if I could leap through, I'd be father of Protestant armies. . . .
How many days to divorce?

II. (CHARLOTTESVILLE, 1970)

Since I have been here I have wanted
to write a poem for the football couples,
too late for the game, too early for seduction,
haunting the fields, or, when it's gray, the supermarkets
where my wife and I splurge on wines. Here, many
are tweedy and bloodshot already; but once, a girl
pirouettes, then stops, frightened at the reflections:
the linoleum, me, the wood wine-arbor, the window
to the heaven of ice creams . . .

O beautiful house of the dusk, and the potted meats stacked like choirs!

A weekend was something you would only go to
with boys who didn't care;
so I'm moved to know that these, too, play at couples,
as we in our shabby Penn Fruit, and pause, hushed,
as I did once, late, at the over-huge windows dim-lit
and the cash registers lonely as priests.

Two boys catch each other down telescoped aisles, and razz.

You laughed like that, like a boy.
You wore a false ring; you piled our basket with everything
that was young and useless, cake-candles, love comics,
and were not sold. How could I have understood?
I wanted Rimbaud, the day on fire, the iron
streets smashed like glass in the dawn of our first touch.

—ALAN WILLIAMSON

DAY-OLD BABY RATS

DOWN near the river a door slams; somebody wakes up, immediately flips over onto her back. She dreamt she went fishing, which is odd because she's never fished in her life. She thought someone was calling her "baby."

There's a lot of January light crawling from beneath room-darkener shades, casting mobile shadows on walls and ceiling. The mobile is composed of hundreds of white plastic circles the size of Communion wafers. As they spin they wax and wane, swell and vanish like little moons. Their shadows are like summer, like leaves, the leaves of the plane tree at the window, which hasn't any, right now, being in hibernation.

Through the crack between window and sill, air that tomorrow's papers will designate Unsatisfactory flows over one exposed arm, making the hairs stand up like sentries. Long trailer trucks continue to grind along the one-way street, tag end of a procession that began at 4 A.M. with the clank and whistle of trains on dead-end sidings, as melancholy as though they were the victims they had carried across the Hudson. The trucks carry meat for the Village butcher shops, the city's restaurants—pink sides of prime beef that you cannot purchase at the supermarket, U.S.D.A. choice, or commercial, pigs, lambs, chickens, rabbits, helped off the trucks by shivering men who warm their hands over trash-basket fires.

In the apartment across the hall the baby is bawling, "I want my milk."

It's cold and bloody in the refrigerated warehouses where the meat is stored prior to distribution. It's pretty cold in here, too. On her feet now, naked, she looks under the shade, which snaps smartly to the top of the window, disclosing a day: very clear for January. And colorful: stained-glass sky over a row of nineteenth-century houses painted pink and lime and lilac and beige, topped by clusters of chimney stacks, one of which emits a tornado of oily black smoke, fast dispersing. She ought to report it.

"I am sorry. The Office of Air Resources is closed till Monday. Please state the nature of the offense and the name and address of the violator and we will take action upon it when the office is open. This is a recording."

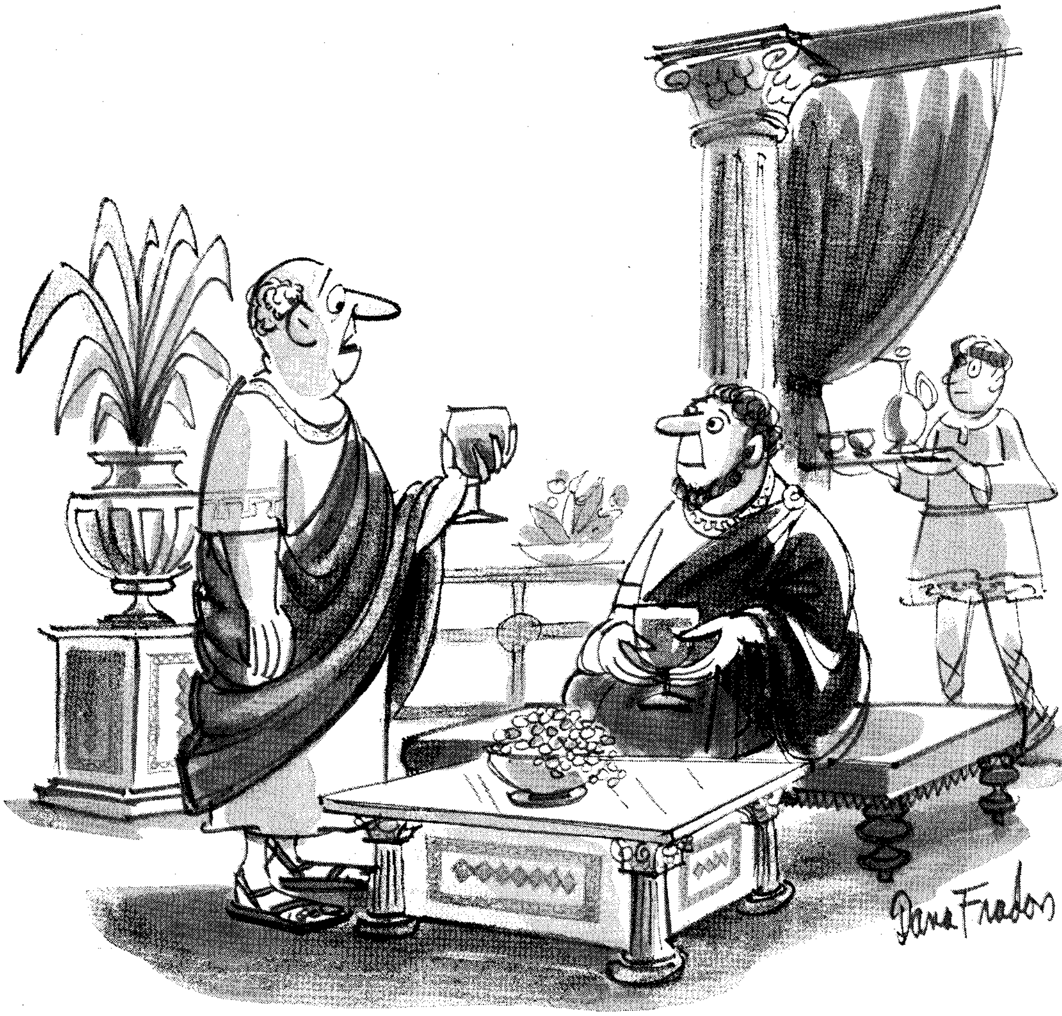
A pair of eyes on the fire escape, the golden gaze of the fat seven-toed tom from the next apartment; she hasn't a stitch on, backs away. Next thing, she's in the middle of the kitchen, bare and green as a guppy, trembling from head to toe, so much that it is difficult to open the door to the lower cabinet, which turns out to house a sizable bottle collection. On her knees she pours into a glass an ounce of Scotch, part of which sloshes over the linoleum in an amber puddle, fast dispersing. She gets the glass between her teeth. One, two, three, wait—the tremor peaks, subsides. She yawns and wipes the sleep from her eyes.

Getting dressed now, the radio going, the listener-sponsored radio. *Don't speak his name. He is everywhere, like spring. His eyes are leaves.*

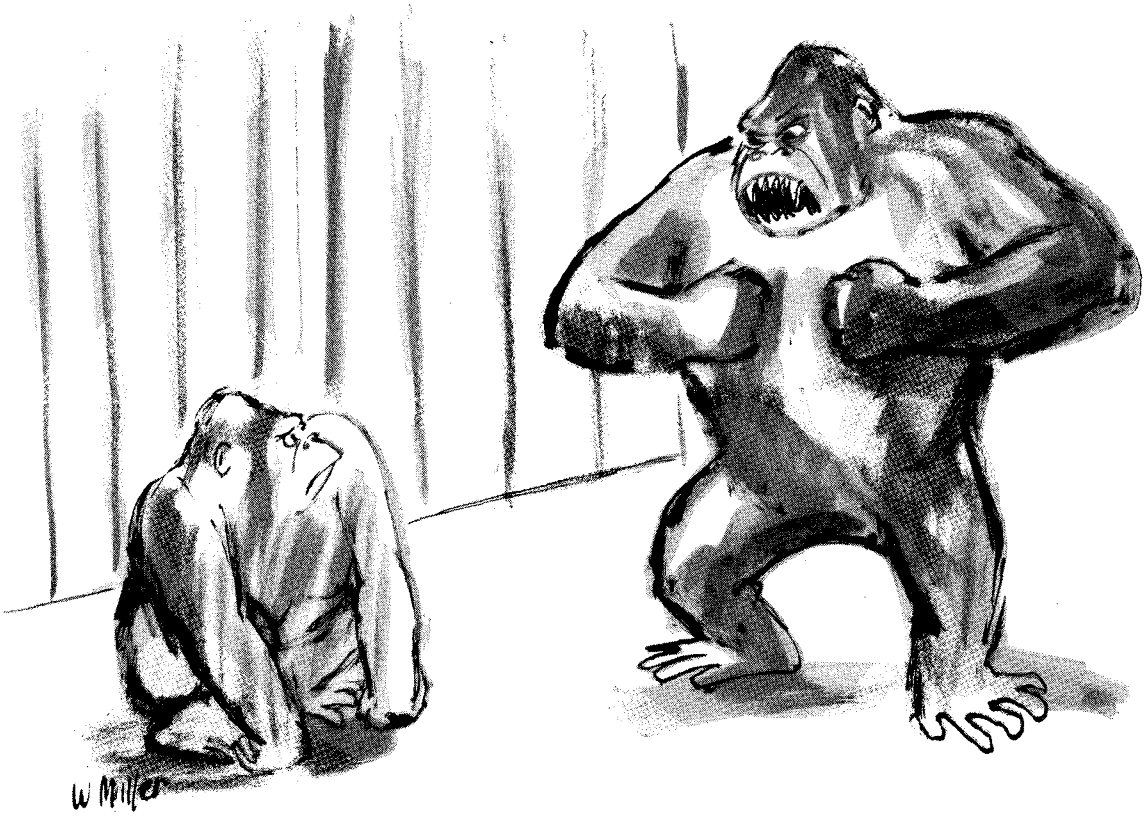
She can find only one shoe and digs desperately in the welter of footwear like a retreat of mercenaries in the bottom of the closet; how did she get so many shoes? She tends to lose things that go in pairs. "Where's my other glove? My new earring—who took it?" she will wonder helplessly, too old to pray to St. Anthony, patron of lost objects.

His eyes are leaves, the birds his messengers.

Certainly somebody took her wallet last week while she was shopping for pants on Eighth Street. It *was* lifted, rather than absentmindedly abandoned in a restaurant, or on top of a cigarette machine. Later that evening a thin, limping man showed up on the doorstep with one half of her driver's license. He explained he had found it in a litter basket in Washington Square.



"I'd hate to tell you how much I'm going to have to render unto Caesar this year."



"Maybe you're descended from a lemur, but I'm not descended from any lemur!"

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Look, flickering in the thicket, at the heart of the thorn tree. Cold as wind— Half shod, she switches to an all-news program: It is after ten o'clock; utilities are unchanged. The other shoe is in the bathroom; she spies it—spitting out a mouthful of toothpaste—under the radiator.

The shadow of a black man, the ripple of a war.

She wraps herself in a white rabbit-fur coat and goes out without locking the door, fumbling for her huge polarized sunglasses in her leather shoulder pouch, down two flights of stairs and onto the sidewalk. Now, here is the big brown United Parcel Service truck lumbering illegally up onto the curb and halting just short of the plane tree, which bears two deep gouges where the same truck wounded it last Monday morning. The driver hustles out and starts up the steps with a brown parcel, whistling.

In the vestibule he rings her bell, which of course nobody answers, since the apartment occupant is beside the truck, copying the license-plate and other relevant numbers into a little spiral notebook.

Still whistling, the young man with the brown uniform and small brown mustache comes back out with his parcel. The woman in the furry coat leans against the tree, glaring through her dark lenses.

"Lady." He stops in mid-trill. "Be nice. I can't go through this again. Just sign the little slip, I give you the package, and everybody's happy."

Through clenched teeth she says, "This time I am really going to report you. Really. Do you know that tree cost one hundred dollars to plant? And people like you, people like you—" But the last words emerge with difficulty, and tears fuzz the sharp outlines, her polarized vision of the sunny world. He cannot see the tears.

She's dying to know what is in the package. With rage the driver throws it back into the truck, THIS SIDE UP down. "You're bad news, lady," he yells, hurtling into the driver's seat; revs the motor. Afraid he's going to take out his temper on the tree, she gets in front of it, and now he cannot move the truck. "If you Don't. Get. Out. Of my. Way. I'm. Going. To Run. You. Down." His voice changes. "What do you want from me, lady?" he implores, unanswerably.

He gets his truck away without a mishap after all.

On the next block the drunk man starts out of the doorway where he has lain all night, stumbling toward her, clawing at his stained clothes. "Hey, don't I know you from somewheres?" His eyes look like pebbles, yellow and veined. "I know you. I know you a nice lady. Won'tcha gimme something, please? Fourteen cents, all I need's like fourteen cents." Smiling brilliantly, dancing around her: "I know you, I watches you comings and you goings."

Finally she digs up from the depths of her pocketbook some change, which falls to the sidewalk; he goes after it, fumbling and muttering in the gutter. All fall he was a worry to her, sleeping so still in his doorway, a crumpled overcoat, and a bottle still in its paper bag at his head like a candle. He has lost the overcoat but acquired some mittens. How does he know her? How has he managed to fight the cold this long, into January?

BACK in the apartment with the newspapers and their interesting headlines:

4 CHAIN-STORES
FIRE-BOMBED

7 L.I. CHILDREN
DIE IN BUS CRASH

FEAR TEN SLAIN
IN RACKETS WAR

GRAVEDIGGERS
CALL STRIKE

Drug Girl, 12, Tells of Freakout

A HUNGRY BABY
DIES: JAIL MOM

Army Dismisses Charge of
War Crimes by General

FOE ATTACKS . . .

POPE BLESSES . . .

Actual Tests Used to Perpare
Pupils for Reading Exams

At the table, with a cup of tea and a cigarette, she gets the gist of the day's news and what the department stores are featuring, since she has errands to run, things to buy. Fidgeting, tongue between her teeth. ("Don't *do* that," her mother used to say watchfully, "you'll ruin your occlusion.") Reaching the weather report (occluded front), she looks warily around, as though she were being watched. But there is nobody in the house, which is suddenly so quiet the only sound is her own, her heartbeat.

There are no clocks in the apartment. What time has it gotten to be? She rushes to the telephone to dial the time, and when she lifts the receiver a voice is immediately in her ear. "Washington operator here. I have a person-to-person call for Mmm. Blur. Hello, New York, will you accept the call, please, New York?" Superimposed on the operator's voice is another, tinny and distant—a woman's?—but she cannot make out the words.

Who does she know in Washington?

No, she will not accept the call, she will not accept the charges. It must be past noon; the sun will be setting before too long. Before 4:37, according to the newspaper.

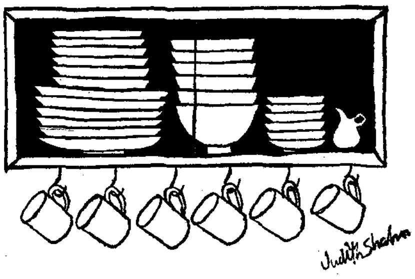
She has not lost her wristwatch, but she cannot seem to extricate it from the repair shop; it's been there for three weeks with a shattered crystal and a broken hand that she suspects they're keeping in traction. She turns her own hands palms up; the creases gleam with sweat—snail tracks.

Steadier now, tongue emergent, she's refilling a pocket flask from the kitchen liquor supply. It's a four-ounce hip-hugger model with a cute red leather jacket that can be unbuttoned for cleaning; she carries it everywhere in case of emergency, of entrapment in subway or elevator. Its predecessor fell on the floor of the ladies' room at the Art Students League, where she was waiting for a perennial art student to finish his life-studies class so they could go out to dinner and drinks or vice versa; how sorry she was to lose it! But she quickly replaced it with an identical model from Hoffritz.

With him she went to an island remote from the city and from everything else. Ten miles out in the Atlantic, off the coast of Maine, where the foghorn cries all night long, once a minute, "It *hurts*," warning ships off the rocks where lobsters lie low (skittering anyway into the baited traps) and the brightest thing by night is the eye of the lighthouse, since the island is without community electricity. The wind blew constantly on the headlands several hundred feet over the sea. When the fog lifted, the ocean was the color of melted blue wax. Way down on the rocks, seals grazed, polychromatic as pigeons: blue, grey, brown, and spotted. Once, they thought they saw far out the spout of a whale.

Some sportsmen that week harpooned a small whale, a blackfish, and towed it into the harbor, stranding it on Fish Beach. All afternoon they worked to extract their three spearheads, up to the arms in blubber, till the sand was red and sticky and thick with flies.

She and he walked in the woods, when he wasn't painting, watched birds and the sunset, ate lobster with slippery fingers. Then she had an appetite, and used to collect leftover oranges or bananas from other tables to devour thoughtfully at night while the lighthouse spun and the foghorn ached. Having gone through her fruit and her library books, she got into bed at last; he sighed, set on by his own bad dreams. It wasn't a success, that holiday. Making love in a blueberry patch, they reached up for berries and ate them where they lay. The days seemed very long. On the rocky cliffs they fought, wind whipping their barbed words out to sea. Back on the mainland, at the bus terminal, early in the morning: "You'll be all right?" he asked, peering into her face as though it were a steamed-up mirror.



On the river, a ship leaving for Valparaiso when the shipping page said it would sounds its plangent departure whistle—music for bones. Three times, as if it would never end, then ends for that particular voyage. It makes her eyes water.

Tropical fish in the living room move around in their tank, weaving gaudily through the underwater foliage, striped golden angelfish, jewel-like neon tetras, gouramis, a fat black molly. The one-eyed catfish oozes along the bottom of the aquarium as though vacuuming a rug. As she bends over them they rise, expecting a shower of ant eggs, frantically kissing the surface. She has forgotten to feed them. Again.

SOMEBODY leaves the house for the second and final time that day. A fire siren evokes the noise of every dog on the block. There has been a fire in the Chinese laundry. An old Italian lady in a greasy black dress giggles at the snakes in the pet-shop window, her week's groceries piled in her grocery cart, and her cat on top of them. *He spreads like fire—don't smile.*

The Goodwill Exterminators have a new exhibit: among the pickled bugs and childishly hand-lettered signs, a jar of milk-white shrimps with tails, labelled "Day old baby Rats, caught in a Vokswagon on Perry Street by Myron." She digs her nails into her glove-

• •

BUCOLIC FOR SARA ENGLISH

They are mooing now—those five black cows
I saw huddled last summer
under a tree by the quarry road,
and thought strange omen.

The next morning I heard a dog's
sudden yelp under truck wheels.
Then a child
cried all day as though in an empty barn
some new tottering child-woe
had been calved.

Now this unexpected letter, and Sara,
my late student,
with four others, spattered
dead
on a Montana highway. The black cows
have gone far for their quarry.

She was fifteen, with long
cornsilk hair
and placid body.
Guernsey heifer I called her,

those quizzical eyes—
waiting pasture.

—Mary Haynes

"Happy birthday, Daddy-o. Though your ruling days are through, we keep trying to forgive you, for you know not what you do."

• •

less palms. *Don't smile; he hates it. Pretend not to tremble.* She checks her left wrist to see what time it is.

The sign over the bank spells out time and temperature in yellow dots:

12:57
79°

Very warm for January.

Near the subway entrance she buys the afternoon paper, and a man pushes her change over the papers with his hook.

THE train stops just outside of the Fourteenth Street station and refuses to budge for several minutes. At Twenty-third Street, for some reason, a mob storms the cars, hustling for seats. A very small woman gets jammed in the half-open door—a midget, really, but still an ordinary-looking middle-aged woman in an out-of-style tweed coat and an out-of-town hat with a little veil, which is looped rakishly, accidentally, over one ear. She appears so helpless that somebody offers her a seat. "Hurry up, Daddy! Over here!" The other half of the door shuts, and she screams. The door opens. Her husband, who is taller, but only by an inch, rushes in, swinging a tiny child over the edge of the platform. They plop him onto the seat she gave up and stand guard, protectively.

"I need a lollipop," the baby shouts over the shriek of the train; no larger than a year-old infant, an achondroplastic dwarf without his parents' good proportions, with very short plump baby arms and no legs to speak of. His forehead bulges above a big, perplexed face, mouth turned down at the corners. Like any child he squirms petulantly in his seat, under a sign which reads "Little enough to ride for free? Little enough to ride your knee!" Daddy midget gives him a lemon lollipop.

She has to cook dinner for eight people next Thursday. She picks out a five-quart casserole in Macy's basement, tries to charge it, discovers that all her credit cards are missing, buys it anyway, orders it sent. "Jeez, Miss, didn't you inform Credit yet?" The elevator to Credit is suffocatingly hot and reeks of fur and perfume. It stops at every floor, and by the eighth she has recalled that she has no charge account with Macy's.

(The U.P.S. man will make a real effort to deliver the dish in time, nicking off more of the bark of the plane tree; ringing and ringing but nobody's home.)

Sweating in her fur coat, she proceeds down the maze that leads to the subway platform, through a crowd of people eating ice-cream cones and asking which way to the Port Authority Bus Terminal; nearly bumps into a soldier who has taken a post by a gum machine. Not an ordinary G.I. but someone on his way to a revolution. Leaf-patterned trousers tucked into combat boots, combat jacket of a different green, green beret pulled down nearly over his eyebrows—even his canteen is in camouflage. Only, his gun is not. He holds his rifle butt end down between his boots like a walking stick. He stares impassively over the crowd, as though he thinks he is invisible. And perhaps he is.

She has reached the last staircase when there is a voice at her back, a whisper: "Hey lady, you need help with your packages?" But her hands are empty.

She is holding very tightly to the railing. Another voice: Middle-aged lady who inquires kindly, "Are you sick, Miss? Do you need some help!"

She shakes her head no, but the lady helps her down anyway, talking cozily. "You know, I had a friend once was so scared of the subway she'd get nauseous when the train came in. It's called claustrophobia? Well, finally the husband made her see the doctor. Well, it turned out that her brother locked her in a closet once when she was a bitty thing, and she'd forgotten all about it. But her heart re-

membered." A leap of the heart. "You know, it was a funny thing. After she got well and rode subways without thinking twice about it, she had one of those freak accidents and almost lost an arm on a Flushing train. I bet the operations cost her more than the psychiatrist did. Well, honey, here's your train."

Tottering onto the lit car, she supports herself against a post, breathes easier until the doors have closed and the train starts down the dark passage. With a felt-tip pen, someone has lettered on the L&M ad, "God is a Sadist."

QUICKLY tiring of her own reflection in the dressing-room mirrors, she buys the first dress she tried on, a silky blue Ban-Lon number that makes her look thin as a doll. There is a delay when she tries to charge it. Shifting from foot to foot with impatience, says yes, she will report the loss. (She will be extremely surprised when next tenth of the month a bill arrives from this department store for $600 worth of merchandise she never purchased. But perhaps she will have notified Credit Service in time to avoid the liability.)

A very young girl with a face like an angel's sits in an armchair in the ladies' lounge, breast bare to her infant daughter; the baby nurses with an expression of concentration, pink palm closing and unclosing rhythmically like a sea anemone. The mother's knees are spread in fatigue. Assorted clothes, diapers, bottles, and magazines are falling out of the department-store shopping bags beside her chair. She looks as though she has been travelling a long time. She has just gone to sleep; eyelashes hover like black spiders over her cheekbones. She snores.

Baby loses the soda fountain and wails angrily. Her mother automatically readjusts the small head and closes her eyes upon the world once more, breathing onto it the syllables, like prayer, "Goddam son of a bitch bastards."

"Breathe in," the nurse instructed. "Pant. Harder." She tried to, like a good girl, sobbing obediently. "It won't hurt so much this way." Actually, it hurt very little. "It works like a vacuum cleaner." Nature, she said, abhors a vacuum. "I usually have a cleaning woman," she told the fluorescent ceiling lights.

A sip from the red flask in the toilet, followed by a rush of acid.

Outside on Fifth Avenue, asbestos flakes eddy in spiral air currents like snow, the carcinogenic emission from a new skyscraper. Something blows into her eye before she can get out her dark glasses. She blinks to tear it away.

Bells jangle. The saffron robes, the shaven-head Buddhists chanting "Hare Krishna" surround her, offering their literature with gentle words. Under their sleazy peach-tinted rayon saris they wear sweaters and sweatshirts, and sneakers instead of sandals. Surely they're in the wrong climate. They sing, "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare," snapping their belled fingers and jouncing to ward off the cold.

The literature is called "Back to Godhead," and shows a circle of girls with pleated skirts like fans dancing beneath stylized Indian flowers, a round moon. "Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare," the hectic singers chant.

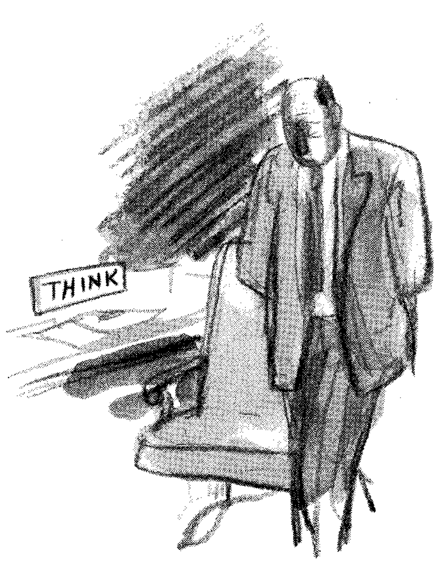
"Oh my God, isn't that Al Silberstang from Fire Island?" says a passer-by, nudging her companion to a halt. Al Silberstang does not cease from his dance. His eyes dwell on inner secrets. She searches for money so she can escape their circle. "Peace, peace, lady," says Al Silberstang, whirling away with her money. But there is no peace from the Buddhists, no peace from the chestnut and pretzel sellers, one at each corner, warming their hands over the braziers and reiterating their spiel.

Escaping across the street, she looks up to see where she is—a mistake; her head begins to spin. What did she eat for breakfast?

Here she is, the rival sect's headquarters, St. Patrick's Cathedral. A man on the steps brandishes a sign, "ANNOYING SICK H-BOMB DICTATOR WILL BE PUNISHED," at an old lady in an old mink, in a walker, going up the steps with the aid of a younger female, daughter or niece, who looks put-upon and cold in her short cloth coat. The old lady's arm is grasped on the other side by a nun. You can tell it is a nun from the navy-blue tailored outfit, like an airline stewardess's, and the truncated veil, revealing a steel-grey curly bang. Nuns never used to have grey hair. Or calves. The nuns of her youth floated like blackbirds. Step. By step. By step, the old lady is guided through a small door set into the heavily ornamented bronze ones. Around the corner is the aftermath of a Filipino wedding, the small white bride shivering and smiling for the photographers.

The nuns with their pale faces taught them myths about eternity and how to walk in processions. " 'Tis the month of our Mother, the blessed and beautiful days," the parochial schoolchildren sang in May, carrying their sheaves of wheat down suburban sidewalks, under the magnolias. A pretty sight. Though *she'd* never really cottoned to Our Lady; she much preferred the Holy Ghost, perhaps because he was a bird.

Heaven, hell, purgatory, limbo, where little unbaptized children lived pleasantly in a garden, crawling on the green grass, and it never snowed. Purgatory was where they melted your sins away; hell was very hot. (A little boy died and a saint revived him. "Oh Mother," he cried, "I have been in such a terrible place!") She is cold.



And hungry: the smell of burning chestnuts rises like incense. "Getcha hot chestnuts! Getcha pretzels!"

He scatters a handful of raw nuts over the coals, extends a bagful with a hand that is like a burnt pretzel, grins brilliantly. "I bet you hungry, pretty lady; I know you—"

TUGGING at the door to the Cathedral, where she's never been. *He eats terror, gulps tears, and spits catastrophes.* The smell of incense, dazzling banks of red votive candles, the purple light from high stained-glass windows decorated with suffering saints. Tourists move chattily around the gloom of the nave; in the side aisles kneel the reverent few. She looks dizzily at the vaulted ceiling, light-years away. She steadies herself on a granite basin. Then, to show she's all right, dabbles holy water from the font and blesses herself like the tourists just ahead. The basin has specks floating in it and a layer of silt.

Her heart beats as though it were trying to get out. Looking for a place to sit down, she travels along an enormous aisle, toward where she sees people as at the small end of the telescope her father gave her once when she was thirteen and infatuated with science. It has been years since she was in church. And what a church! Are you supposed to cover your head these days? She has no cover, not even a handkerchief to pin to her hair.

At a side pew occupied mostly by women her knees signal *no farther*, and she slides in. Her uncovered scalp prickles dangerously. She thinks, with longing, of her flask.

As she plans about getting back down the aisle, or at least behind a stone pillar, the women begin trickling out the other side of the pew. An elbow in the ribs: it is the niece or daughter of the woman in the walker. "Miss, could you please move along, or are you asleep, dope?"

Unable to reply, she shies into the aisle, abandoning (she will remember later, in a crowded room) a brown-and-white box from Saks Fifth Avenue to the niece or the H-bomb man or St. Patrick. Or him, the god of fear. There's a convenient pillar, and—what is this?—a curtained cubicle behind a brass gate, private, hidden, a good place to take stock and think her way out, back to the right door. Sneaking a backward glance, she parts the white curtain, ducks in, groping for familiar leathery corners. Just as she has the cap off and is tilting the flask back, there is a hair-raising creak. Somebody else is only a breath away. And listening. And murmuring, through a grille, "*Ja, mein Kind?*" Fallen into the hands of the Nazis. "Yes, my child," he says impatiently.

Good heavens, somebody is answering. It is her own high parochial-school voice, her very tongue snapping out the appropriate response. "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been fifteen years since my last confession." At last she gets the bottleneck in her mouth. Alcohol is instantly absorbed through the stomach lining into the bloodstream. At once the molecules are joined up, spreading the cheerful news.

Anticipatory silence. Perhaps he only understands German. She racks her brain—she has no wish to go spilling the secrets of her life to a stranger. First you confessed sins against the Church, then against God. She remembers a sin against the Church: "I have missed Mass."

"How many times?"

"Every time." Quick swallow. A rush of confidence. "I used God's name in vain five times. I disobeyed my parents three times. I was rude to a nun once. I slapped my little sister. I was untruthful—" Running out of sins, she adds, desperately, "I smoked marijuana."

"On how many occasions?"

"I don't remember."

He clears his throat, beginning to sound like a Viennese psychiatrist. "So, is that all that you wish to tell me?"

"Well, not quite," she stalls (once more should do the trick). Then she realizes that now there are three of them in the confessional; someone else is waiting on the other side, behind the priest, making a priest sandwich, getting restless. She shifts heavily to assert her presence—probably the niece woman who called her "dope."

"Oh no, Father," she says, tilting the flask back for another round. Not all of it reaches her mouth, there's spillage; the booth fills with the odor of alcohol in addition to that of Listerine. She is tempted to offer him a nip through the grille, for his stomach's sake. "But it's been such a long time." A weak giggle. Her time, and the jig, is up.

The Big Ear is no longer fooled. "My daughter, I suspect you are spoofing me. There are penitents waiting; you are wasting my time. Why are you here? What do you want?" No answer. "Do you want absolution? If you are in some kind of trouble, we shall discuss it in the rectory at two-forty next Wednesday. Father Kleinhardt is the name."

"Father Kleinhardt, I am frightened."

"For your penance say three Hail Marys. Now make an Act of Contrition.” Switching tongues, he begins to absolve her in Latin.

“I am frightened to death, Father.” But he chooses not to hear.

She begins, “Oh my God, I am heartily sorry,” and slips out, leaving him committed to the end of his Latin prayer, noticing a sign taped to the side altar: “Father Kleinhardt: English-Deutsch.” At the altar of St. Anthony a prayer is posted in mock parchment, promising the reciter forty days’ indulgence. She has got away with it, she is outside, she is free.

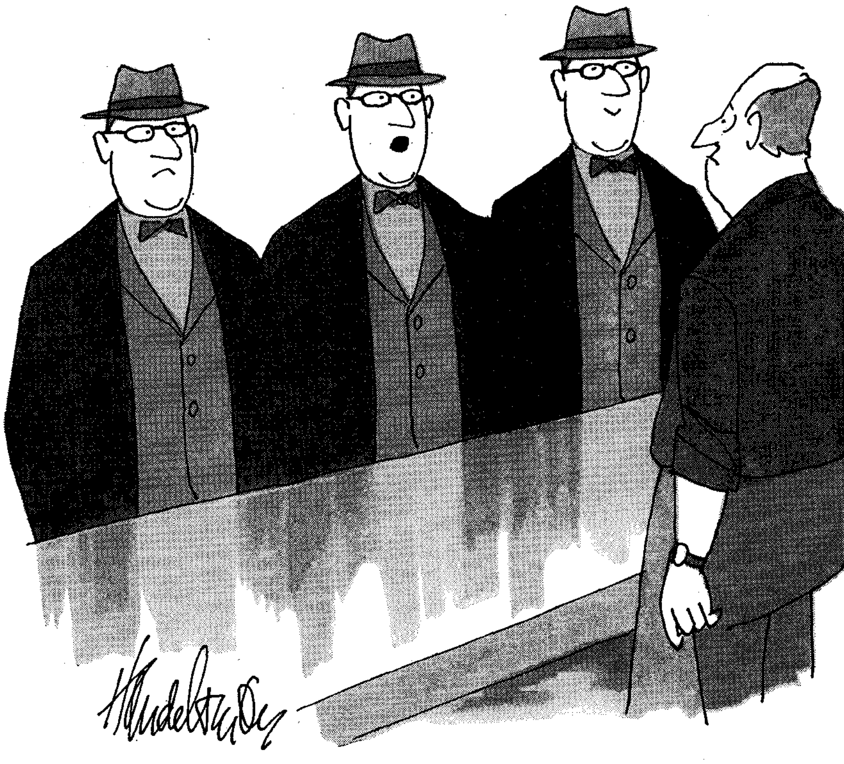
The morning she left the northern island a young deer escaped from it, the only one of the herd imported from Boothbay Harbor who couldn’t settle down but rampaged through the woods like a crazy thing and ate roses out of village gardens. After they found hoofprints on the beach, they put out salt for him in the woods. He passed her boat swimming like a small horned seal in a mainland direction; it was too late and too foggy for the lobster smacks to find him. By the time she reached the city he was fathoms deep, and the fish were grazing off his antlers. “Taxi, lady?” said a cabdriver outside the Port Authority Bus Terminal. The man drove demoniacally, hunched like a jockey over the wheel; only when they reached her apartment did she observe that it was because he couldn’t straighten his back. In the full glare of the street lamp his features leapt at her: the thrust chin, the snub nose, the furrowed forehead with its huge wen, the maimed, cleft, two-fingered hoof of a congenitally deformed right hand. Smiling hilariously, he scratched at the wen. “Take it easy now, lady,” he told her.

(The dead deer lies among the rocks, nibbled bare by sea worms and crustaceans, far from home; barnacles have attached themselves to his skeleton; when spring comes a fisherman will draw up with his catch its alien skull, and think it is something new.)

Once you have seen him he will never let you get away with anything.

NOW it is time, definitely time, to start uptown, taking it easy and crossing with the lights. The sun has gone down, leaving a stain in the west. At a store window she acknowledges with a slight smile her reflection: a thin woman in a white coat and big black glasses, soon to be middle-aged, puzzled because the years went so fast and the days so slowly. And, someday, old.

Killing time, she stops to light a cigarette and is nearly swept over by an energetic group of tiny children, chattering in the half-light by Central Park. There are about eight of them, fat as chickadees in their snowsuits. Isn’t it late for them to be out? “I’m *cold*,” complains one grumpy mite with thick glasses and a circle of mustard around his mouth to one of the two teachers, long-haired girls in furry coats like her own. They seem to have lassoed her. Then she realizes it’s a rope; they’re clinging to a rope, with a teacher at each end, and she has got in the middle. What a good idea; little children will hold on if you tell them to.



“Double Scotches for me and my super-ego, and a glass of water for my id, which is driving.”

The teachers untangle her and say, “Come along now,” jerking the children briskly down the sidewalk. A small spectacled girl has a pink balloon floating from the end of her little finger. There are a lot of pairs of spectacles for such a small group of kindergarten-aged children.

The children are blind. These are blind children, with their teachers, sightless among the seeing, though she can’t see any too well herself, in her dark glasses with the sun gone down, hurrying toward an uptown appointment.

The hot light. An egg, a shiny egg dancing in a glass. (Sunday morning she will burn the bacon and spill the scrambled eggs on the floor trying to stamp out the fire in her bedroom slippers.) Lying on a table, somebody cried, “Hey that hurts, it hurts,” and yet it didn’t hurt that much.

“Relax. Don’t fight it,” said the nurse. “Would you care for a cigarette? I’m afraid all I’ve got is Salems”—putting it between dry lips.

An involvement of the inner space, a truly savage pain. Slurp, water whizzing in the basin. Will it travel down the sewers like an abandoned pet, eyeless, lost to the gene pool, never to breed?

Doctor having left the room, his assistant matter-of-factly sprinkled water over what was in the basin, saying, “I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”

“You are baptizing a newt,” she said reproachfully.

The nurse looked ashamed. “Sorry, but I just have to do this. Say, you know, I keep newts?”

“I have tropical fish, myself.”

Let’s go to bed and tell lies—almost there now. *Committing our murders decently, in private.* Punching the moon-white elevator button. The elevator boxes her into a private space; she rises with it, shaking in silence. *I don’t know the enemy’s you. You haven’t heard he is me.*

He greets her at the door, waving a Martini glass, reeling her into the party. “Oh my God, am I glad to see you,” she says.

—JULIE HAYDEN

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Cahn, who is president of the state association, said that 99 per cent of the 50 members of the executive and legislative committees . . . had responded to a mail poll.—*Newsday.*

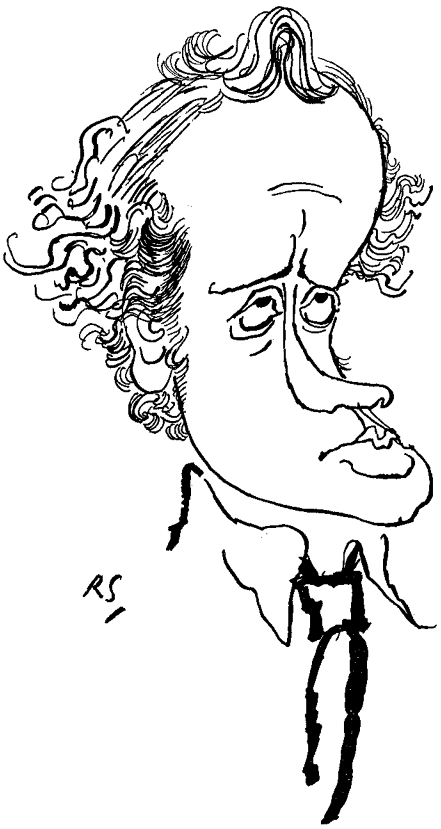
That’s more than just good.

PROFILES

ARE YOU THE ENTERTAINMENT?

ON February 24, 1969, Richard Nixon arrived in London at the beginning of a European tour. He dined that evening at Chequers, the Buckinghamshire mansion that is the official country home of Britain's Prime Ministers. After dinner, his host, Harold Wilson, drew him over to a sofa, where (as Nixon tells it) "he engaged me in a very extended and animated conversation." The other guests assumed that some international problem had grabbed the two men's attention, and wondered busily what it was. In reality, they were talking about an actor. An infrequent and normally unenthusiastic playgoer, Wilson had recently attended the first night of a new production of "Hamlet," staged at the Round House—a converted Victorian railway shed in North London—by Tony Richardson, and what he was now so urgently saying was that the President must make a point of seeing Nicol Williamson, whose performance in the title role had been highly praised by the London critics. Williamson, said Wilson grandly, was the best Hamlet of his generation, perhaps of the century. Nixon explained that he had no free evenings, and this seemed to be the end of the matter. But the name clearly stuck in his mind, because later in the year items began to appear in the American press about the President's interest in Williamson's work.

These clippings reached the desk of Stanley Schneider, the President of Columbia Pictures, which is the company responsible for distributing the movie version of Williamson's "Hamlet." Schneider called J. Raymond Bell, his Washington man, and instructed him to find out from the White House whether the President would like to see the film. It seemed that he didn't have time. Too bad, said Bell. In that case, how would it be if Williamson came out to Washington and gave the President an hour or so of "Hamlet" in person? It was now late in January, 1970. Red Skelton had just inaugurated a series of so-called Evenings at the White House, which would subsequently include the Broadway cast of "1776" and a *tour de chant* by Peggy Lee. A fair, square sampling of popular culture—but a touch of "Hamlet" in the night could do the Nixons' intellectual status nothing but good, and the Columbia proposal was referred to the President for a decision. At about this time, a London newspaperman telephoned Oscar Beuselinck, a stocky, outspoken London solicitor who acts as Williamson's agent in England, and asked him to confirm or deny reports that his client was going to Washington to entertain the President. Beuselinck replied, with that bluntness of manner and delicacy of grammar which characterize him, "Who's kidding whom?" He scented a hoax and, knowing Williamson to be of a mischievous nature, suspected that he might have started the rumors himself. A few days afterward, Columbia got the answer it was hoping for: Nixon wholeheartedly approved of its suggestion and would be happy to devote an Evening to Nicol Williamson, who thus became, at the age of thirty-three, the only legitimate actor ever to be invited to give a solo performance at the White House.



Nicol Williamson

I FIRST met Williamson about seven years ago—fleetingly, at theatrical parties in London. Not that he relished parties as such: he was rightly reputed to be a solitary, and lived alone in a cramped ground-floor apartment in the Notting Hill Gate district, which is a sort of shabby-genteel buffer state between the West End and suburbia. From time to time, there were girl friends (or so one heard), intensely cherished until some long-ticking emotional time bomb exploded, after which all would be over, but what he mainly needed was "mates to stay up with" (as one mate put it)—companions to see him through the dark hours when extreme dismay might strike. Among people he trusted, he could be excellent party value. I think of him at John Osborne's house, one night in 1965, singing jazz standards of the twenties and thirties and accompanying himself on an eighteenth-century keyboard in a style you might describe as stride spinet. Already he was a figure of some mystery and consequence, his work admired by his fellow-actors as well as by the critics and the public, his general demeanor a boon to the show-biz columns, where epithets like "wild man" and "hell-raiser" were ritually dusted off in his honor. He was known to have talked back to noisy latecomers, to have walked offstage in more than one fit of self-hating rage, and even to have slugged David Merrick backstage in Philadelphia. (Oscar Beuselinck, a stickler for the proprieties, had repeatedly warned him, "You're in the public eye, cock, and you've bloody well got to learn how to behave.") He had made his first London success in 1962, at the age of twenty-five, when he joined the Royal Shakespeare Company and appeared—within a single season—as a thieving aircraftman in Henry Livings' "Nil Carborundum," a penniless Russian gambler in Gorky's "The Lower Depths," and a seedy Jacobean cuckold in Middleton's "Women Beware Women." At the Royal Court Theatre, he had gone on to play the inordinate hero of J. P. Donleavy's "The Ginger Man" and (indelibly) Bill Maitland, the cynical, defeated lawyer in John Osborne's "Inadmissible Evidence."

From a few encounters in the mid-nineteen-sixties I learned that he was savagely observant. He had a disconcerting ear and eye for one's weaknesses, for the tricks of gesture, accent, and inflection that expose and define one too vividly for comfort. Even today, I cannot think of Tony Richardson or John Osborne without recalling Nicol's rendering of their voices: the impersonation has usurped the original. His physical presence was immediately potent—the tall, stooping, tapering silhouette, the receding ginger hair, the worn forehead, the bemused blue eyes, and the smile that was all tired commiseration, suggesting an ex-champ making a dubious comeback rather than a young contender for the title of best actor in the world. The lower lip protruded Hapsburg fashion, as in a Velázquez portrait of Philip IV. Now and then, there would be a winning flash of a grin, crooked and raffish, accompanied by an upward flick of the eyebrows, which he shrugs as others shrug their shoulders—a grin of wicked complicity. At the same time, his eyes would roll, making him look slightly desperate. I remember talking to him about "Inadmissible Evidence." He said he used to sit onstage "with the stench of death in my nostrils." He acted best, he told me, when he was contemplating death—"not the character's death but my own." He added, "You must go to the edge; you must look over the brink into the abyss." He did not sound in the least pretentious.

He has a sly but well-organized urge to dominate whatever group he finds himself in. When listening to a substandard anecdote, I normally manage to stay poker-faced, no matter how eminent the raconteur, but if it is Nicol my lips automatically crease into a smile. He makes you feel that not to respond, not to complete the emotional circuit, would be an act of betrayal. By seeming to be always vulnerable, he succeeds in being always one up. He is fond of quoting a phrase that was brayed at him by a young Birmingham intellectual when he was in his teens: "Dear Nick—*yet* so hesitant, *yet* so sure!" He is at once hypersensitive and supremely self-confident, and it can be difficult to tell, from one moment to the next, which is the kernel and which the shell. A girl named Pauline Peters, who recently interviewed him for the British magazine *Nova*, has shrewdly remarked, "You feel that whatever you say you're putting the boot in."

I tentatively reached the same conclusion some four years ago, when he came to dinner with me for the first time. He behaved like a king stag transported to an alien domain and exercising the territorial imperative as if it were a divine right. To begin with, he turned up an hour early—a masterly ploy that caught my wife and me unwashed and unchanged. Full of apologies, he volunteered to pass the time by Hoovering the living room, on the mildly annoying tacit assumption that the carpet was dirty. Before we could dissuade him, he had dragged the machine down from an upstairs closet and was passionately mowing away. "Who else is coming?" he asked when I returned in a clean shirt to prize the Hoover from his grasp. I told him that one of the guests was Jonathan Miller, the director, writer, and former comedian. "Biggest phony in London," Nicol said crisply. "Who else?" I said that, apart from the Millers, there would be a pretty girl named Yvonne Stacpoole, who had been having a lengthy affair with the celebrated Italian director Piero Ghiberti. (Both Stacpoole and Ghiberti are pseudonyms.) Nicol stored up this information for later use. No sooner had the other guests arrived than he strangled conversation almost at birth by producing an L.P. of the Mamas and the Papas and playing it at full volume on the stereo. It takes a lot to silence Dr. Miller, who had already launched into a vivacious chat about Byzantine art, but even he had no answer to tactics so blatantly antisocial. When we moved downstairs to the dining room, Nicol munched for several minutes in silence before addressing his first remark to Miss Stacpoole. "So you're the girl," he said engagingly, "who was sleeping with Ghiberti?" He reinforced the remark by placing his left hand on his right biceps and making a swift upward jab with his clenched right fist. For the second time in the evening, everybody stopped talking. Miss Stacpoole, who had never met Nicol before, was exquisitely unfazed. "I'm afraid you've got it wrong, Mr. Williamson," she said simply. "I *am* sleeping with Ghiberti." Nicol grinned and nodded, but he was obviously affronted by her cool, and a few minutes later he got up and left the room. We soon heard a deafening five-minute blast of the Mamas and the Papas, followed by a clatter of footsteps on the stairs and a slammed front door. "I enjoy sacred monsters," said Jonathan Miller, "but preferably in zoos." That night was Nicol at his worst, trapped among intellectuals, uncertain of the rules and therefore opting out of the game. Penelope Gilliatt, one of his closest friends, said to me on another occasion, "Nick likes jousting with people, but he jousts to win. And, of course, he's a congenital no-sayer. He regards a lot of quite considerable men as vermin."

For some time after that aborted dinner, my only contacts with him were professional. In the winter of 1967, I did a long filmed interview with him for an American TV program on the art of acting. Leaning against his own mantelpiece, sipping his own champagne, he was fluent and secure. Among other things, we discussed the conventional wisdom that urges young actors to play as many parts as they can in order (so the cliché goes) "to keep the instrument in tune." I asked him why, since his success three years earlier in "Inadmissible Evidence," he had played only three new parts, each for a strictly limited run.

His reply was an adroitly modulated *tirade*: "Every man knows his own instrument, and I know mine. I know what it is capable of, and there are certain things I want to play. But I don't want to stand up there every night and do all the parts in the book. People say, 'Keep the instrument tuned,' but there are a lot of hairy parts that you just have no time for, that it would bore the anus off you to play. So what—so you can do it, so you're the most technically accomplished actor in the world—but why? It's like that camera filming us. If you keep that machine running and running and running and running, it is going to have to be serviced, it is going to break down. Now, I've talked to actors who have played the same parts I have, and when I tell them I'm tired or I'm shattered or I'll go nuts if I do this any longer, they say, 'Oh, but I played it for *x* number of performances and I didn't find it tiring at all.' The simple answer to that is 'No, because you don't work the way I do.' Because I am playing it totally and absolutely, which means that I sink everything in it to make it the most marvellous, compelling, total thing you can see. And nobody will do that better than I will. They will do it differently, but they won't do it better. Now, you can't go on working like that all the time. I am going to die quite young anyway and move into the ashes department, but before I do I am going to *choose* what I do, and it's going to be the most exciting departments of drama and comedy that I can think of, and you can't do that indefinitely or you are going to thrash yourself into the grave. And for what? For 'I did six hundred and thirty-two performances of "The Bells"'? *But how well did you do them, Henry Irving?* Or 'I played "Othello" three hundred times'? *But how do we know, Edmund Kean, that you were really all that good?* If you are going to be the best at your job—if you feel that, which I do feel—then you have got to take it easy. Most audiences don't want to go under the skin, they don't want to get into the heart and bones of things, because it frightens them and they don't like it. But they have *got* to be frightened. They may not like what I do, but they won't fault me on it—at least, not much. I am going to do certain pieces of work in certain areas that actually mean my life, that are going to keep me alive by their value and excitement. And that is all. There is nothing else in my life. I've lost about three women that I was deeply in love with because I didn't pay enough attention to them. Look at all this, for Jesus' sake." He indicated the little room. "Not that it's all that much, but it *is* comfortable and it *is* happy, and we can smash out the odd bottle of Bollinger and it's lovely. *But* . . . *But* my whole life is circled and centered round the next piece of work, and I've got to take time over it because it's going to have you on the edge of your seat, and I want you to like it and be destroyed by it."

I asked him what he would like to have engraved on his tombstone.

He gave me the slanting grin and said, " 'Life isn't all you want, but it's all you've got, so stick a geranium in your hat and be happy.' "

In January, 1970, I took him to lunch at his favorite London restaurant—the Étoile, in Soho—to find out whether he would like to work with Laurence Olivier's National Theatre Company, where I am employed as literary adviser and general idea man. I wasn't particularly sanguine: a notorious non-joiner, he had turned down many such invitations since quitting the Royal Shakespeare in 1962. All the same, the offer that Olivier had authorized me to make him was certainly better—as the Australians quaintly say—than a poke in the eye with a burnt stick. For his first season with the troupe, he could pick any three of the following roles: Rogozhin in an adaptation of Dostoevski's "The Idiot," Judge Brack in "Hedda Gabler" (directed by Ingmar Bergman), Danton in "Danton's Death," Hildy Johnson in "The Front Page," the elder son in "Long Day's Journey Into Night," and the title part in "Macbeth." If he chose the O'Neill, I added, I could promise him Olivier as his father and Mike Nichols to direct. Royal flushes like that are rarely dealt to young actors. Nicol gave me a sympathetic hearing, generously praised the bouquet of the La Tâche '61 that we were drinking, and took just twenty hours to consider and reject the whole glittering package.

"That fine line between gracious attendance and fawning obsequiousness—tell me, sir, how close did I come?"

• •

NICOL regards it as a weakness to answer the telephone. Moreover, when he is using it to call others, he never identifies himself; you have to guess who it is, and if you hesitate your uncertainty instantly puts him one up. On February 11, 1970, his phone rang all morning, but he was in a non-answering mood, to the high annoyance of Oscar Beuselinck, who was fuming at the other end of the line. ("I might have been offering him a million dollars, but he still wouldn't have given a damn," Beuselinck said later. "If that client of mine doesn't take care, he's going to end up in the gutter. You can cry wolf just so often, and then the offers stop coming. He isn't really an actor at all. He's a bloody busker." Buskers are curbside entertainers who perform for theatre queues, passing the hat round afterward; when Nicol heard of Beuselinck's remark, he said that, if anything, he felt flattered.) He went out to lunch and came back to find a message from his charwoman: "Ring Oscar B. He sounds very excited." He dialled the number and learned that Columbia had confirmed the rumor: Nixon wanted him to give a Shakespeare recital at the White House on Thursday, March 19th, just over five weeks away. Columbia would pay all expenses. Almost for the first time in his professional life, Nicol said yes without hesitation.

I heard about the project (and formed the idea of joining him on it) a few days later, when he called me up to discuss it. Already it was clear that his plans for the Evening were rather more ambitious than anyone in Washington imagined. "I don't want to just read bits of Shakespeare, or even just read bits of other books, or even just read," he said. "I want to give them something breathtaking, something not many people can do." He told me he had decided to sing as well as act. Knowing his taste in music, which was nurtured at Jimmy Ryan's under the tutelage of people like J. C. Higginbotham and the De Paris brothers, I wasn't surprised to hear that his accompanists would be a nine-man group called the World's Greatest Jazzband, led by Yank Lawson and Bob Haggart, and dedicated to basic Dixieland. (The seven other members of the ensemble included such survivors from the pre-microgroove era as Billy Butterfield, Lou McGarity, Kai Winding, and Bud Freeman.) I asked him whether, as a presumed liberal, he had any qualms about serving as court jester to Nixon. "I wouldn't act in South Africa," he replied after a pause, "but otherwise anything goes." This was the first entrance of a theme that was to be heard with several variations during the next few weeks.

While the Evening took shape in

odd corners of his mind, he busied himself professionally by recording an L.P. for C.B.S. Records. (Entitled simply "Nicol Williamson," it was released in the summer of 1971.) I turned up at the studio to watch the first session. It was 8 P.M., but work had only just begun: Nicol is a night creature. A large orchestra, twenty strings strong, was playing a ballad; the star murmured soulfully into a mike, his forehead a map of undulating furrows, his face resembling one of those sad but resilient saints you see carved on the portals of Romanesque churches. He was wearing a blue shirt with a silk scarf knotted inside it, and looked hairier (except on the thinning scalp) than I remembered him. Near-Dundrearies now flourished on his jowls, and a mustache drooped down to the chin in a thin reddish line. When he smiled, he put me in mind of Randle Patrick McMurphy, the obstreperous hero of Ken Kesey's "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest": "This guy is redheaded with long red sideburns and a tangle of curls out from under his cap . . . broad across the jaw and shoulders and chest, a broad white devilish grin, and he's hard . . . kind of the way a baseball is hard under the scuffed leather."

As the song built to a climax, he let rip with an amazingly rich and pungent tenor voice. It was obvious from his timing and breath control that he had not studied Sinatra for nothing. "They can say what they like," said a young sound-mixer in the control room, "he's the best pop singer who ever played Hamlet." The number ended, and Nicol came in to hear the playback. When it was over, he said, "I'm a quarter-tone flat in the middle section, and I bet nobody noticed it." Nobody had.

"Were you nervous at all?" asked the producer.

"What you think is nervousness is in fact my tremolo," Nicol said. "That's not what's wrong. Let's do another take."

"Can you bear to?"

"Six times a week and twice on Sundays."

Williamson then walked out of the room, apparently on some errand. While he was gone, an engineer said incredulously, "Is he really making his first L.P.?"

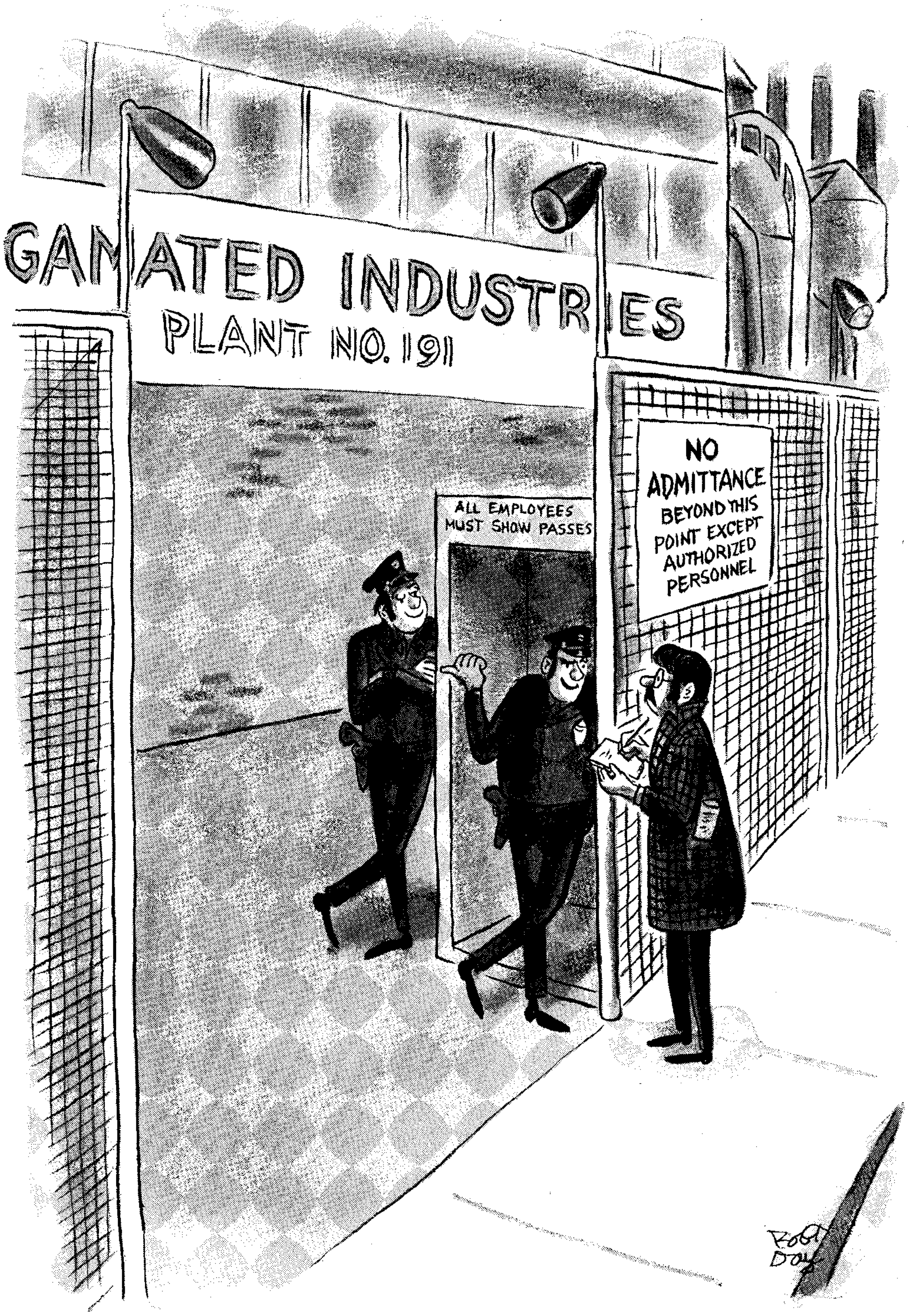
I gathered that from the beginning of the session Nicol had been commanding retakes, suggesting changes in instrumental entries, and generally running the show. He loves to be a pro among pros: to talk football to footballers, music to musicians; to be accepted by the inner circles of professions other than his own. When he got back, he had somehow acquired three bottles of champagne (Taittinger Blanc de Blancs), which he distributed in teacups to the crew. Someone asked him about the film of "Inadmissible Evidence," which was the first he had ever made. "I didn't see it," Nicol said. "But when it was finished I said to the cameraman, 'Am I any good? Am I as good as Spencer Tracy at his best?' Because those are the boys who really know. And he said I was. So that was enough for me."

"Shall we go on, Nick?" said the producer tentatively.

Nicol clapped him on the shoulder. "You know us actors," he said. "A glass of champagne, a pat on the back, and we'll eat flaming grass."

In all, the session lasted three hours and yielded one fine track—a version of Jim Webb's "Didn't We, Girl?"—of which I later obtained a test pressing. Guests at my house have confidently identified the performer as (among others) Perry Como, Dean Martin, and Andy Williams. The trouble with Nicol's singing voice may well be that it makes you think of everyone but Nicol.

On February 24th, Nicol phoned me to say that word of his Washington gig had appeared in the New York *Times*, in an article about Mrs. Con-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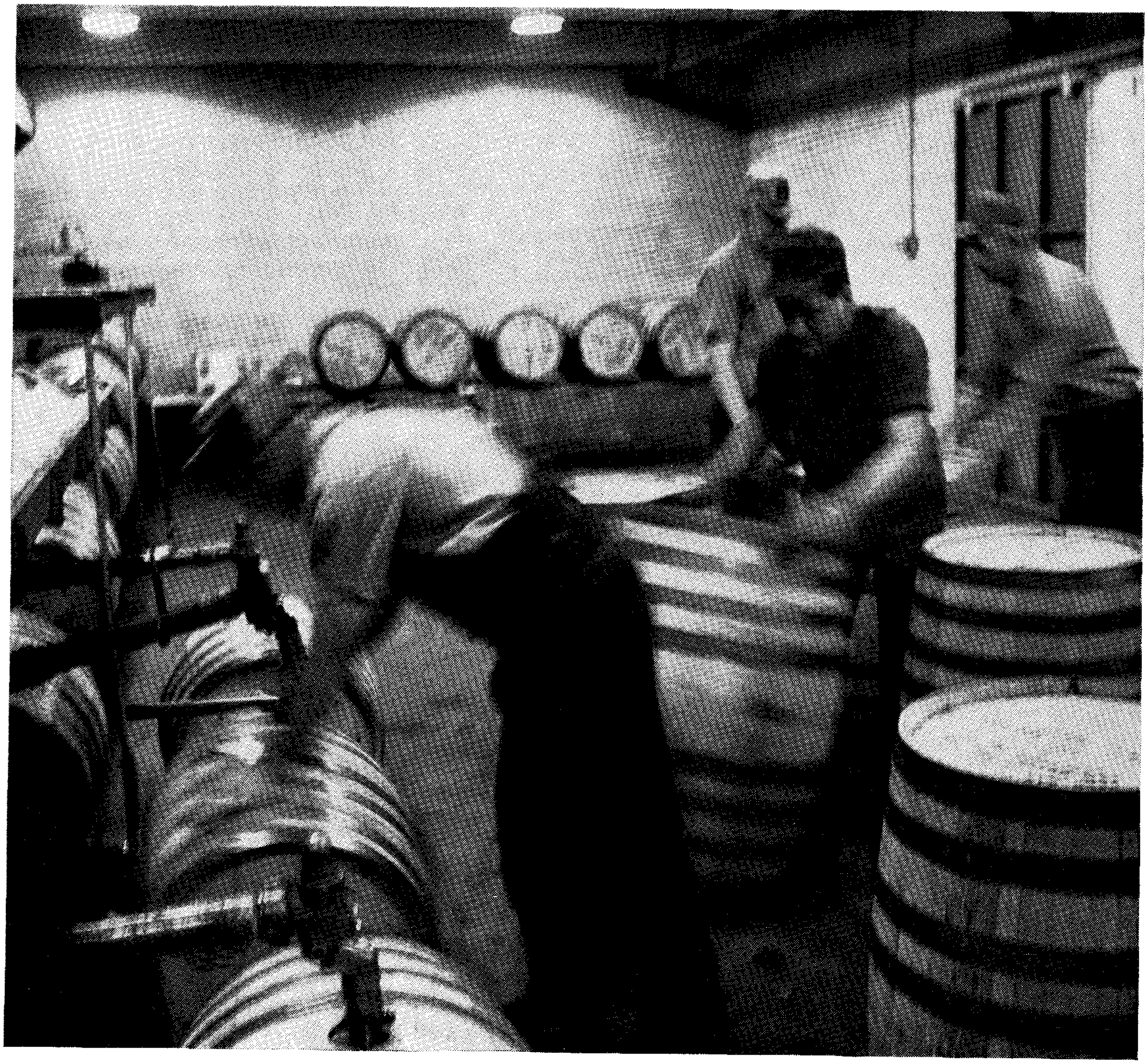

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nie Stuart, director of Mrs. Nixon's staff, and "producer-in-residence" (the *Times* said) of all White House entertainment. Mrs. Stuart was described as "a tall, peppy redhead" who liked moose-hunting and had taken a degree in speech and drama at the University of Maryland. "When you come to the White House, it's a real cultural experience," she said, adding that future Evenings would "run the whole gamut." (To illustrate where that might lead, she revealed that the President "would like to have good college choruses from the Midwest.") Nicol, she announced, would be doing scenes from Shakespeare. Either the *Times'* man wasn't listening very closely or Mrs. Stuart's speech was slurred, because the piece went on to say that Nicol's name had been proposed by "Earl Wilson, the night-club columnist." "So it's all fixed now," Nicol said to me gloomily. "That's when you start to panic."

Another recording session took place on March 6th, with more Taittinger out of teacups. This time, there were no violins; the supporting group was a Chicago-style septet, bursting with middle-aged energy, and featuring the veteran Max Kaminsky, who had been flown in from New York at Nicol's request to play lead trumpet. The star rehearsed and recorded "I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None of My Jelly Roll," then paused to pass out champagne to a bunch of theatre people who had dropped in to listen. "You look a bit wild tonight, Dad," said a dapper little actor, accepting a cup. "You've been pulling at your hair again." Nicol was absorbed in argument about the liquor intake of a celebrated jazzman: "I tell you, before every set he used to sink *two half-pint tumblers* of neat Courvoisier."

Finishing his drink, he went off to run through "I Wish I Could Shimmy like My Sister Kate," and I chatted with John McGrath, a handsome Scots playwright in his thirties who had written two of the films—"The Bofors Gun" and "The Reckoning"—in which Nicol had starred. McGrath's version of "The Seagull," modernized and set in the Scottish Highlands, had been directed by Anthony Page for the Dundee repertory company in 1960; Nicol had played Duncan, which was how McGrath renamed Chekhov's suicidal hero, Constantin. "After the performance one night, Nick and I were drinking in a pub with some of the cast," McGrath told me. "Suddenly he said that, like Constantin, he was going to kill himself. He leaped up and ran out of the bar towards the Tay estuary. On the way, he stopped to take off his shoes and socks, which seemed a rather eccentric touch. Maybe he was just giving us a chance to catch up with him. Anyway, he actually did jump into the river, and we actually had to pull him out. Nick has some great spiritual discomfort. I mean, you can't go *on* chucking yourself off things." On at least two other occasions, it seemed, Nicol had convinced McGrath that he was about to die. "Once, in the pub next door to the Royal Court Theatre, he said he'd had an electrocardiogram and his heart was going to pack up at any moment. I think he really believed it by the time he'd finished telling me. I certainly did. Another time, he conned me into driving him to Harley Street by saying he'd had some tests and the doctor was going to tell him that afternoon whether or not he had terminal cancer. Of course, there were no tests and no doctor. But he gave a great performance."

We talked about Nicol's acting. "In Dundee, he wasn't a star," McGrath said. "He was an actor the way other people are coal miners. Nowadays he's become something you might call the Actor as Existential Hero. You know the story of how he walked offstage halfway through 'Hamlet,' saying he didn't feel good enough to act that night? That was a kind of Existential bravado. He had to show that you could do it and survive. Really he deserves a four-hundred-page preface by Sartre. As a matter of fact, there's a bit about acting in Camus's 'Myth of Sisyphus' that comes pretty close to Nick." (Consulting the Camus book later, I found the following passage, in which the author explains why the Catholic Church used to condemn actors: "She repudiated in that art the heretical multiplication of souls, the emotional debauch, the scandalous presumption of a mind that objects to living but one life and hurls itself into all forms of excess.")

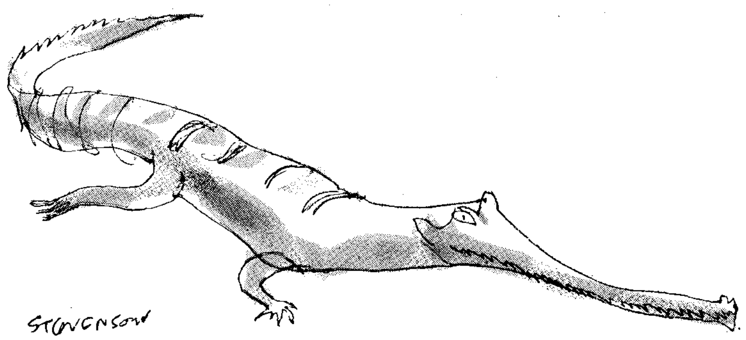
McGrath's first stage play, "Events While Guarding the Bofors Gun," was filmed in 1968, with Nicol as the central character, a self-destructive psychopath: both play and part were written "for and in some minute measure about Nick," McGrath told me. "What I like about him as an actor is his ambiguity," McGrath said. "He's capable of thinking—and expressing—two different things at the same time. And what I like about him as a person is that he has no ultimate goal, no overriding ambition. You remember he appeared with Wilfrid Lawson in 'The Lower Depths'?" Lawson, who died in 1966, at the age of sixty-six, was a performer of wayward genius—sometimes galvanic, never predictable, given to bouts of alcoholism, and venerated by many of his juniors in the profession. "Nick reminds me of Lawson. He gives off the same sense of danger, and he doesn't give a damn. More than anything, I'd like to see him play Macbeth." It seemed to me, I told McGrath, that Nicol the actor was dazzling in wild attacking vein ("Who the hell do they think they are?") and in moods of abject vulnerability ("They'll louse me up the way they always do"), but that he was sometimes less persuasive in more temperate emotional zones, such as tenderness and charity. "Ah," McGrath said, "he can do *them* to music. Next to Macbeth, I'd like to see him in a musical." As if to prove his point, Nicol's voice floated gently over the mike:

> "Leave them laughing when you go—
> And if you care, don't let them know."

I should have recalled that Nicol had in fact appeared in a musical, though only for one night. He played the title role in T. S. Eliot's "Sweeney Agonistes," set to music by John Dankworth and performed in London as part of a tribute to the poet shortly after his death. He had been hair-raisingly good, especially in a song beginning with Eliot's lines:

> I knew a man once did a girl in
> Any man might do a girl in
> Any man has to, needs to, wants to
> Once in a lifetime, do a girl in.

McGrath's most recent collaboration with Nicol had been on the film called "The Reckoning." The role, again written with Nicol in mind, was that of a ruthless, thuggish company director from the slums of Liverpool. "Nick's commitment to the character was total. He identified with it so much that he nearly overbalanced the picture. The thing about Nick is



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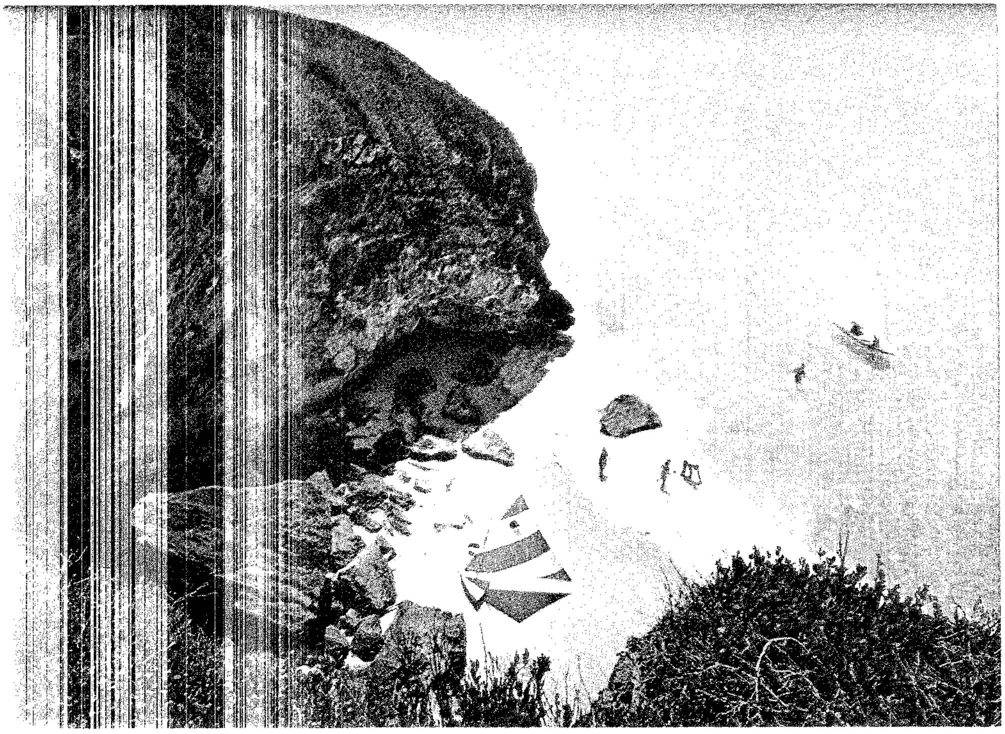

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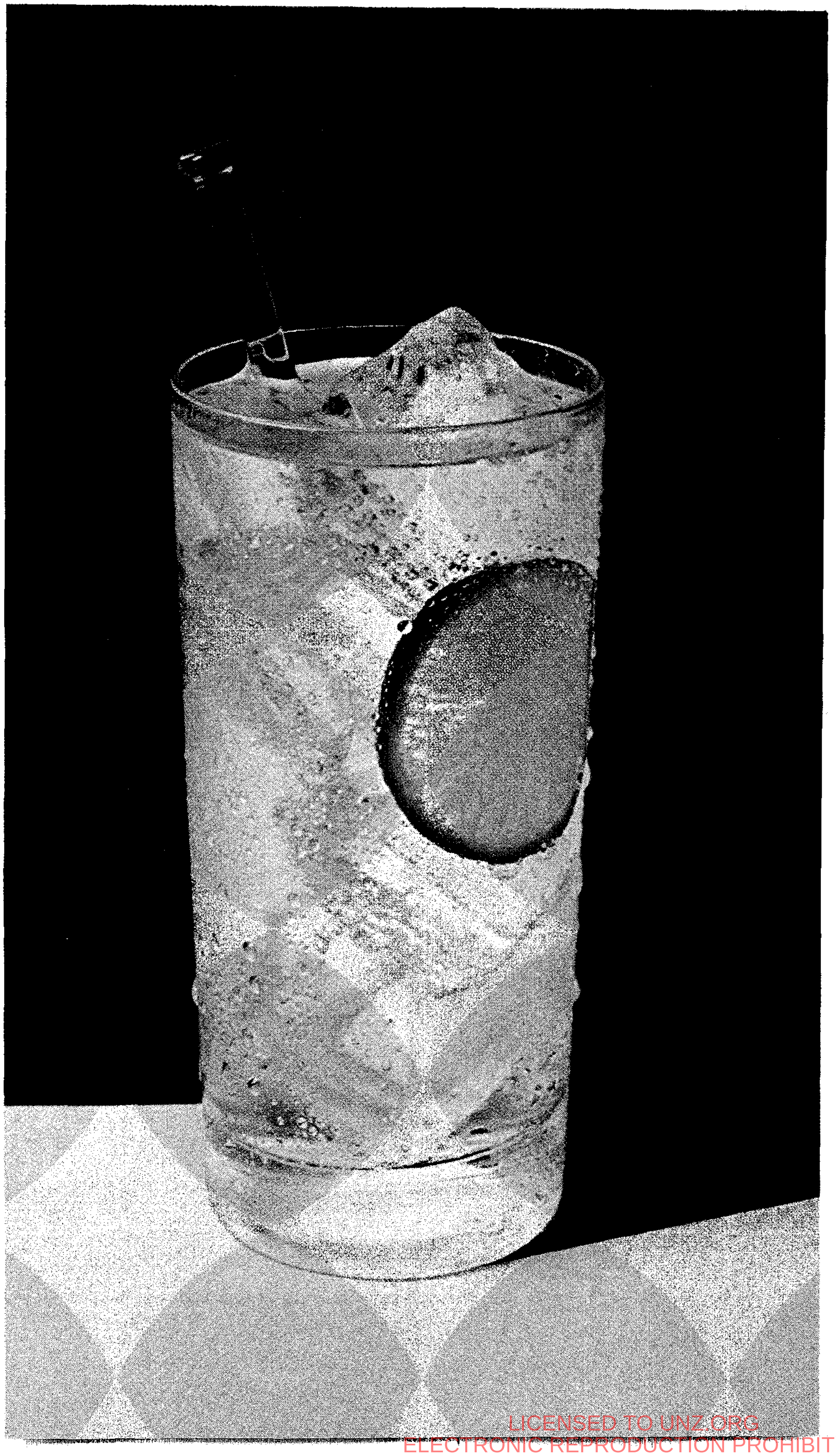

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Rum & Tonic is made like anything else & Tonic, except with rum. For a free recipe book of the many drinks you can make with rum, write: Rums of Puerto Rico, 666 Fifth Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10019 that he really likes the jungle. That's where he lives."

On March 10th, the Variety Club of Great Britain held its annual luncheon, at which Nicol was presented with its award as the best film actor of 1969 for his performances in "Inadmissible Evidence," "The Bofors Gun," and "The Reckoning." He made a one-sentence speech of thanks and sat down. "I didn't even feel patronizing," he told me. "I just felt nausea and self-disgust. But at least I resisted the temptation to just say, 'Bollocks.' "

Despite the acclaim his film appearances have received, I haven't always found them convincing. In "The Bofors Gun," directed by Jack Gold, he played a baleful Irish private, serving with the British Army in postwar Germany, who spends a long and increasingly drunken night on guard duty trying to provoke a saintly young bombardier (David Warner) into having him arrested. The bombardier is a decent liberal who believes in trusting people. Expecting the best of mankind, he meets the worst in Nicol, a symbolic Lucifer to his Christ. The rest of the cast assembles in true theatrical style, a cross-section of British society fully aware that it is taking part in a play and that a moral crisis must therefore be precipitated and duly resolved. The satanic Irishman is so bombastically overwritten, his madness and death wish are so heavily signalled ("I should not be at large," "I hate all goodness," "I am not long for this world"), that the part can hardly be played without being overplayed. Nicol did his best, and it was far more than enough.

"Laughter in the Dark" (1969), one of the numerous cinematic progeny of "The Blue Angel," was directed by Tony Richardson and concerned a rich middle-aged art connoisseur who falls for a sexy little usherette (Anna Karina) and is destroyed by her. After losing his sight in a car crash, he retires to a Mediterranean villa, into which the girl smuggles her new boyfriend; together they mock the blind man by making love almost under his nose. Nicol seemed ill at ease playing a member of the ruling class, and in several early scenes he looked like a sheepish butler in his own house. The authority that should have gone with the character's wealth and rank just wasn't there: he was too easily flustered, too perceptibly dismayed, so that one began to suspect that Nicol's face might be too expressive for the movies. Moreover, he lacked the effortless confidence we associate with the thirties superstars (where did they get it, with the Depression at home and Hitler prowling abroad?), and it was only in his blindness that he showed his real class. Defenseless and humiliated, he came into his own: it isn't easy to forget the scene in which he weeps, his fingers fumbling for a cigarette, as Karina describes the view of mountains and ocean that he cannot see.

The film that Tony Richardson made of Nicol's "Hamlet" was shot in the Round House, where the production had been staged, but it was mostly big heads spotlit in the dark and seemed to be taking place in a sunless nowhere. Nicol was a sedulously anti-romantic prince, a Hamlet out of Grünewald or Dürer, superlative in moments of rancor, contempt, and needling resentment, worrying the lines like a terrier worrying a bone. But he made some curious verbal slips, one of which killed outright the only surefire laugh in the play. This occurs when Polonius takes his leave and Hamlet comments, "You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal." Nicol said, ". . . I would *not* more willingly part withal," which is meaningless. The performance, for all its power in negation and its genuine pain, seemed unwilling or unable to convey any objective passion, by which I mean a passion for such things as ideas, ideals, and causes. Something in the actor's temperament appeared to inhibit—even to exclude—strong feelings about anything outside himself. Quite often this was Hamlet at Hamlet's own lowest valuation ("a dull and muddy-mettled rascal . . . a-cursing like a very drab, a scullion!"); he could never have been as Ophelia describes him—"the courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword." It is relevant to note that Roman Polanski at one time considered inviting Nicol to play the lead in his movie of "Macbeth" but finally decided against it. When I asked him why, he said, "Nicol Williamson should not play geniuses or kings or princes. He should play ordinary men who are extraordinary."

Sometimes, as *Variety* might put it, crix nix Nick's pix. "I could go on forever about how people have put the knife into me," he once told me. "It doesn't matter. Pull it out, turn round, move on." While it's in, however, it hurts. Some of the worst perforations were inflicted in January, 1970, when Pauline Kael, reviewing the "Hamlet" film, wrote in this magazine:

> Nicol Williamson is a violently self-conscious actor whose effect on the camera is like that of the singers who used to shatter crystal. . . . He goes from being gracelessly virile to being repulsively masochistic, and, whichever it is, he's too much. . . . Williamson is always "brilliant" and "dazzling." He *is* brilliant, he *is* dazzling—yet he's awful . . . probably the worst major (and greatly gifted) actor on the English-speaking screen today.

"That review," Nicol said to me, "was like POW!" He has buddies among the critics, but only after they have gone on record in his favor; he would never try to charm a good notice out of a stranger. Alan Brien, in the London *Sunday Times*, called him "this most versatile of our young actors," and said that his West End début in "Inadmissible Evidence" had "probably not been matched since the first appearance of the youthful Charles Laughton." Having listed a few of his physical characteristics—"eyes like poached eggs, hair like treacle toffee, a truculent lower lip like a pink front step protruding from the long, pale doorway of his face" (Nicol breeds similes in critics like a god kissing carrion)—Brien summed him up thus:

> However small the part or the theatre, however short the run or sparse the house, he plays for honesty and truth, callously unsympathetic towards the prejudices and sentimentalities of his audience.

Although Brien is *persona grata* to Nicol, his favorite critic is unquestionably Ted Kalem, of *Time*. When the stage production of "Hamlet" reached New York, Kalem jumped in off the deep end:

> His Hamlet is a seismogram of a soul in shock. Here is a Hamlet of spleen and sorrow, of fire and ice, of bantering sensuality, withering sarcasm, and soaring intelligence. He cuts through the music of the Shakespearean line to the marrow of its meaning. . . . Take him, all in all, for a great, mad, doomed, spine-shivering Hamlet, and anyone who fails to see Williamson during this limited engagement will not look upon his like again.

Later, drawing on his most incantatory prose, Kalem installed Nicol in his private pantheon of living great ones:

> Some actors occupy the stage; a few rule it. Some actors hold an audience; a few possess it. Some actors light up a scene; a few ignite the play. These combustible few blaze with the *x* factors of acting—intensity, intelligence, and authority. Theirs is a royalty apart from role, and when an Olivier, Gielgud, Nicol Williamson, or Irene Papas treads the stage, their fellow actors are as rapt as the audience.

If Kalem is Nicol's trusty pilot fish, there is no doubt about the identity of the Creature from the Black Lagoon. This role belongs, by right of devasta-

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tion, to Walter Kerr. The *Time* eulogy of "Hamlet," published on May 16, 1969, was by way of being a counterblast to a scorching piece by Kerr that had appeared a few days earlier in the Sunday drama section of the New York *Times*. Kerr's general point was that Nicol played Hamlet in exactly the same manner that he had played "Inadmissible Evidence." He granted the actor's intelligence. What he missed was, first of all, "physical tension":

> Mr. Williamson's arms hang idly from shoulders already idle. His is a pale, flattened face, with kinky uncut hair billowing out so far behind him that it becomes his head, robbing his features of dimension; it is also a face that seems to have severed association with the listless members that might have been expected to carry it anywhere. . . . His coming or going makes no emotional difference.

No ignition here, no shivered spine. Kerr's second, and major, objection was to "the particular noise Mr. Williamson makes":

> The voice is a quick twang, the sort of sound a man might make if he spoke rapidly while carefully pinching the bridge of his nose. . . . The performance, as a whole, seems one given by a museum guide who obviously knows what he is talking about but is severely crippled by a blocked sinus.

The notice was headed "Oliver Twist as Hamlet," and Nicol deeply resented it. "He reviewed my voice, not my interpretation," he said. "Jesus Christ, I was trying to make an *interesting* noise, not a beautiful one. The trouble with people like Kerr is that they can't forgive me for making Hamlet someone who is *insufferably alive*."

The name of Kerr recurred to haunt the next development in the White House project. On March 11th, Nicol and I were to fly from London to New York, where he planned to rehearse for a week before the big night. At two o'clock that morning, I was awakened by the phone. "It's all off," said Nicol, sounding insufferably alive. "The whole thing is off. Forget it." His New York agent, an expatriate Englishman named Lionel Larner, had just received a copy of the guest list for his Evening, and had called to tell Nicol that they had invited Walter Kerr. The star was in a state of near-paranoid fury: "Why should I spend all this time and energy just to go and be savaged? It's diabolically immoral. I've told Lionel that either they cancel Kerr's invitation or they can forget the whole thing." He hung up. Hoping to persuade Kerr to have a diplomatic illness, I called the *Times*, and learned that he was attending an opening at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre. By 3 A.M., I was through to the box office, leaving a message for Kerr to call me collect during the intermission. Soon Nicol was on the line again, with a short bulletin: "Lionel has talked to the White House people. They said they couldn't withdraw an invitation. So the hell with them." Around 4 A.M., a bewildered Walter Kerr spoke to me from the theatre lobby; he said he couldn't get to Washington anyway, because of a prior engagement, and had just mailed a letter expressing his regrets. I dialled Nicol's number, only to find out from the operator that, with characteristic elusiveness, he had changed it the day before (for the third time in a month) and that, in any case, it was ex-directory. I then went back to bed for roughly thirty minutes, after which the phone rang again. "Listen to this," said Nicol, chuckling richly. "The White House has just called Lionel back. They finally got mad and said to him, 'Who's running this show—Mr. Williamson or Mr. Nixon?' And Lionel said very coolly, 'Mr. Williamson is running the *show*. The President is running the *country*.' " I told him the news from the Ethel Barrymore, which appeared to mollify him: the trip was on again. In its uneasy blend of confusion, hysteria, and exhaustion, this nocturnal episode encapsulated much that was to come.

LATER that morning, on the plane to New York, Nicol orders champagne and tells me the story of his life. He was born on September 14, 1936, in Hamilton, Scotland, a mining town eleven miles from Glasgow. His parents were poor. "When they got married, they came out of the registry office with half a crown in their pockets. That was in the morning. Dad went back to work in the afternoon."

When he was eighteen months old, the family moved to Birmingham, in the industrial Midlands, where his father worked as a laborer in a foundry. "I had the usual boring suburban childhood. I kept saying to myself, 'I've got to get out of here or I'll *die*.' I read a lot at first. By the time I was five, I knew all about the Macedonian phalanx and things like that. But when I was twelve or thirteen I stopped reading—or, at least, I stopped amassing useless knowledge." Nicol's father (whom John McGrath had described to me as "an imposing man, strong and gentle, very Scottish") looms up in his conversation as a powerfully reassuring figure. "He came to London to see me in 'Inadmissible' and afterwards I introduced

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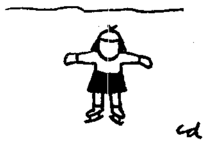
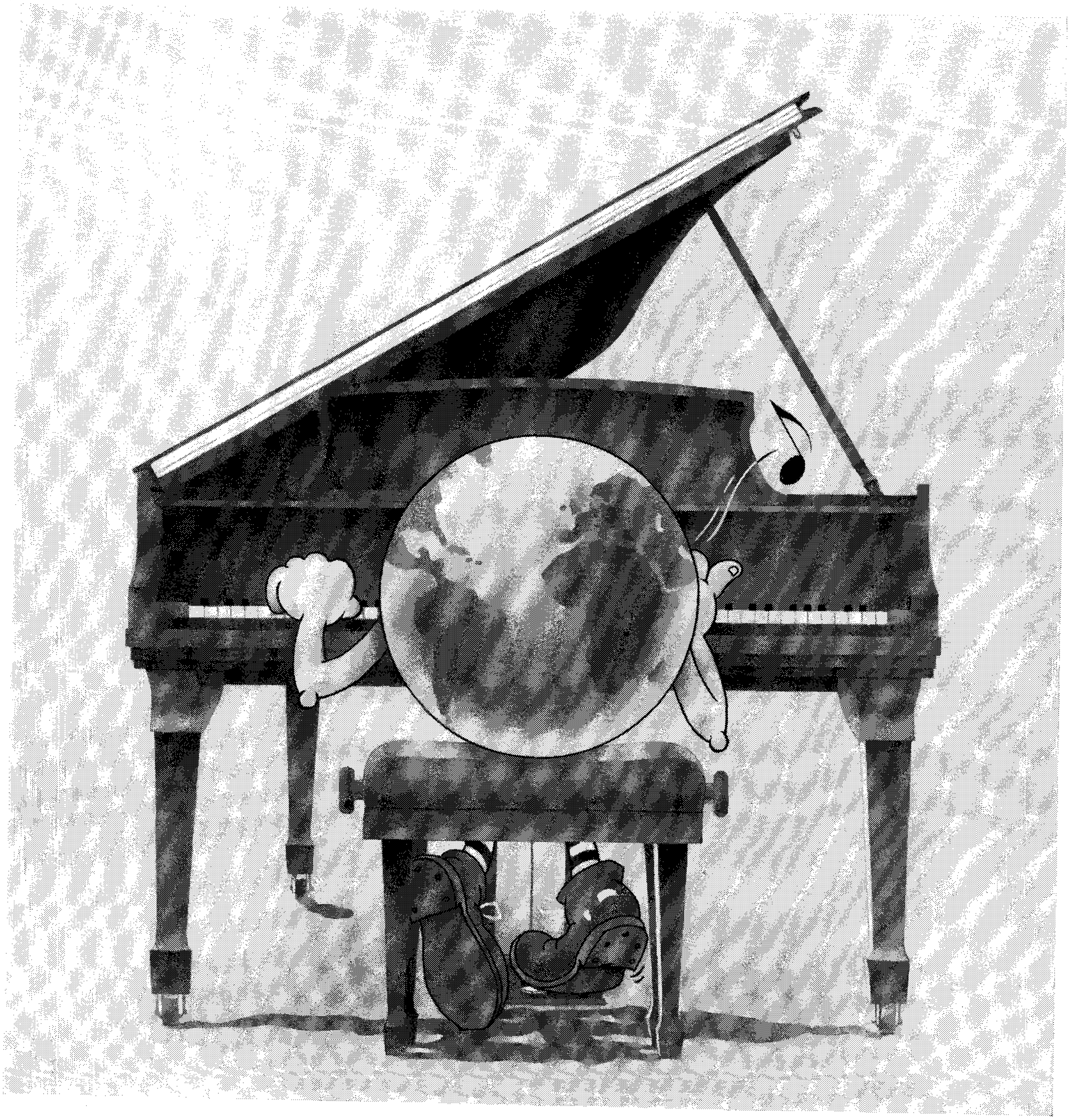
him to George Devine, the director of the Royal Court. George said to him, 'Your son's doing very well, isn't he?' 'Yes,' he said, without a flicker. 'That's what he's there for.' " In 1957, Williamson senior returned to Scotland; now in his late fifties, he owns a small factory that makes aluminum ingots. "Typically, he hates the unions but pays his workers more than union rates."

From 1947 to 1953, Nicol went to the Central Grammar School in Birmingham, where a man named Tom Reader taught him English and prophesied success for him as a classical actor. "I still see Tom. One rainy day in 1963, when I was feeling miserable because of a bird, I got on a train and went to see him at his home in Staffordshire. We went out to a pub, but he insisted on buying the drinks, which meant beer when I was dying for vodka. I asked his advice about getting married, and he was all against it. 'He that hath wife and children,' he said, 'hath given hostages to fortune.' Peter Hall had just offered me a long-term contract with the Royal Shakespeare, and Tom said I should accept. He told me I should learn to 'use the system.' I said that wasn't possible for me—I wasn't patient enough. I went home and turned Peter Hall down."



In 1953, he enrolled in the Birmingham School of Speech Training and Dramatic Art. He was there for three years, during the last of which he was lent to the celebrated Birmingham Repertory Theatre to play unpaid walk-ons. (One of the paid members of the company was the young Albert Finney, then halfway through his first season as a professional.) Under the false impression that Easter Monday was a holiday for actors, Nicol missed a performance and was fired. The management gave him the option of playing one more night if he would make a public apology to the cast, but he preferred to leave on the spot. "I told myself, 'I'm after that mountain. This little hill is nothing to trip over.' " After drama school, he spent two years at Aldershot, doing compulsory military service as a gunner in an airborne division. He made fourteen parachute jumps, but he never gained promotion. He discovered, however, that he could impose himself on people and become their leader by force of temperament. "Somebody told me I was very good at what he called 'personality blackmail.' " *The phrase means: Play ball* with me or I shall exude such a dislike of you that you will feel simply dreadful. Out of the Army, he went to Scotland and worked for a while with his father. Growing restless, he wrote to the management of the Dundee Repertory Theatre, which hired him to play a pirate in "Sinbad the Sailor." Three months of unemployment followed, and, in desperation, he was about to audition for a job as a crooner when a telegram arrived inviting him to return to Dundee. "There were actors there," he says, "who were definitely U.F.P." (under false pretenses), and it wasn't difficult for him to distinguish himself. During the next seventeen months, he appeared in thirty-three productions, most of them staged by Anthony Page, the company's resident director. Word of Page's discovery filtered south, and in 1961 Nicol made his London début, at the Royal Court Theatre in "That's Us," a colorless piece of social realism by Henry Chapman. It was at the Court that he met (and soon afterward worked with) Tony Richardson, who was then George Devine's second-in-command.

Nicol demands and obtains extra caviar to augment our B.O.A.C. lunch. He then launches into a dissertation on loyalty, declaring that although he has been scrupulously loyal to Richardson and Page, they have both betrayed him in their time. "When Tony Page wanted to cast me in 'Inadmissible' in 1964, Tony Richardson sent him a cable saying Nicol Williamson very bad idea stop nothing more than good rep actor." Page nonetheless stuck to his guns. When the play reached America after its London run, David Merrick wanted to fire Page during the Philadelphia tryout. Nicol defended his director, and a noisy argument broke out backstage. "As a rule, I detest people who get into fights. They are *thunderously* boring, and that kind of behavior is *fantastically undesirable*. But Merrick had to be insulted, and insults must be delivered with style. I was holding a glass of Budweiser. Suddenly I remembered how José Ferrer had thrown champagne over Fred MacMurray at the end of 'The Caine Mutiny.' He didn't chuck it at him, he flicked it forward like this." Gesture as of a man throwing a dart. "So I said, 'I won't stoop to spit in your eye,' and let him have it with the beer. Then he sort of rushed at me, and I stuck out my fist and he was on the floor. The funny thing was that nobody in his entourage tried to attack *me* or help *him*." Page stayed. It was shortly after the Broadway opening that his alleged act of treachery oc-



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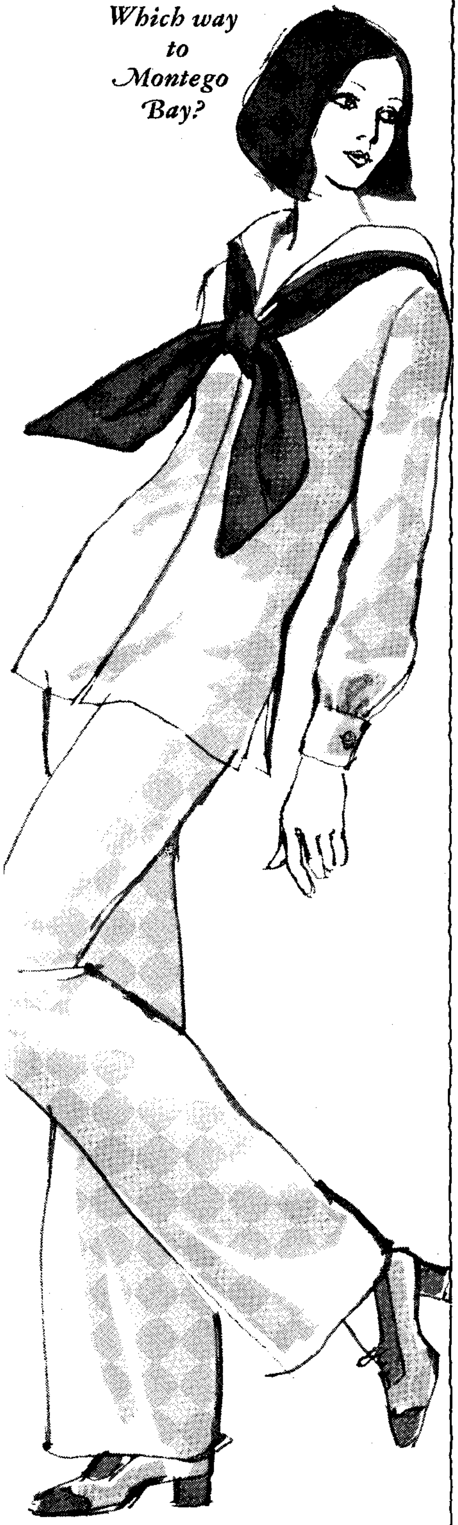
curred. Merrick had asked Nicol to take a salary cut until the weekly gross improved. "I refused. So he talked to Tony Page, and Tony Page came to see me and absolutely *begged* me to accept the cut. It was pathetic. I haven't forgiven him for that and I never will." His relationship with Tony Richardson declined to a nadir of comparable bitterness. Just before the "Hamlet" production was due to go to America, Richardson returned from a Riviera holiday to see the last London performance. Not liking what he saw, he called a company meeting at which he singled out Nicol for particular blame. Describing the incident, Nicol leans toward me and speaks with venomous distaste: "I said to him, 'I'm not going to *ask* you not to talk to me like that again. *You. Will. Never. Talk. To. Me. Like. That. Again.*' "

Signalling for more B.O.A.C. champagne, he says, "I'm not what they call a good company man." Togetherness in any form has invariably been a hazard for him; it is a room that he enters warily and, more often than not, wrecks before quitting. Outraged by the faithlessness of women, he has been known to stub cigarettes out on the palm of his hand. "He wounds and is wounded easily," one of his female mates had told me, "and he's always very courteous to other walking wounded. He gives them bottles of Dom Pérignon." During the Broadway run of "Inadmissible Evidence," he fell in love with a young actress who was appearing in the show; when it closed, she got a TV job in Hollywood. He followed her there, and she deserted him for a stunt man. "I almost destroyed myself. I got extremely drunk and drove a car at top speed down a hill full of hairpin bends." He crashed off the road into someone's patio; the accident cost him a week in hospital. Shortly after that, he dined at Chasen's restaurant with Lionel Larner and Jenny Beuselinck, a pretty, dark-haired young woman, who is the wife of his London agent. The bill, which included a selection of his favorite wines ("*great* Moselles, Burgundies like La Tâche and Grands-Échezeaux, and the very *best* champagne"), came to more than three hundred dollars. After dinner, Nicol, who was driving, insisted on reënacting the zigzag jaunt he had so narrowly survived a few weeks earlier. With his two agonized passengers clutching each other and sobbing with fright in the back seat, he carried out his threat, and finally swung safely into the driveway of the Beverly Hills Hotel. Mrs. Beuselinck retired, trembling, to bed; Nicol and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Larner unwound by consuming more champagne, to the value of two hundred dollars. "I have the Jonah hang-up," Nicol says serenely. "I seem to bring bad luck on myself and my friends." (On July 17, 1971, he married Jill Townsend, the actress whose defection had provoked that first hell-bent excursion.)

We land at Kennedy Airport, with slight loss of focus on my part. The alcoholic pace is beginning to tell, so I resolve to rely on a journal, rather than my memory, for a record (or fever chart) of the next eight days, which are now all that stand between us and Nixon.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

OUR flight is met by Lionel Larner, brisk, dapper, soft-voiced, dark-haired, fur-collared, somewhere in his thirties. Manner: show-biz British, or camp on the verge of being struck. Has some trouble with his "r"'s. He has organized a limo to take us to New York. On the way, Nicol shows us the official White House invitation, an ornately printed card announcing the appearance of "Nichol Williamson in 'Five Hundred Years of Entertainment in Poetry, Drama and Song.' " Sounds like a longish evening. Nicol finds the misspelling inoffensive but ominous.

Installed in the Cecil Beaton Suite at the St. Regis, he rings for cocktails and outlines what he intends to give the Pres. From "Hamlet": the speech to the players, the "O! what a rogue and peasant slave" soliloquy, and possibly "To be or not to be." Elsewhence in Shakespeare: Macbeth seeing the dagger, Malvolio finding the letter, Hotspur confronting Henry IV, and mainstream-jazz settings of "Sigh No More," "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind!," and "When Icicles Hang by the Wall." From the modern repertoire: Willy Loman's protest against the callousness of superannuation ("A man is not a piece of fruit"), from "Death of a Salesman;" Bill Maitland's attack on the uncaring coolness of the young, from "Inadmissible Evidence;" an extract from Eliot's "Little Gidding;" an erotic poem by E. E. Cummings; and the final pages of Samuel Beckett's novel "How It Is." In addition, Nicol will sing "Baby, Won't You Please Come Home?," "Darktown Strutters' Ball," and a song by John Dankworth about Macbeth, called "Dunsinane Blues." To give the star pause for breath, the World's Greatest Jazzband will play "South Rampart Street Parade" and Kid Ory's "Savoy Blues."

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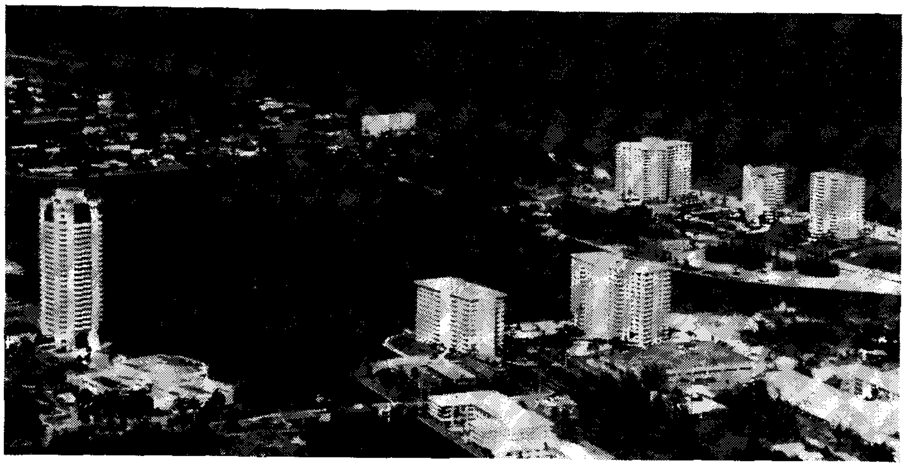

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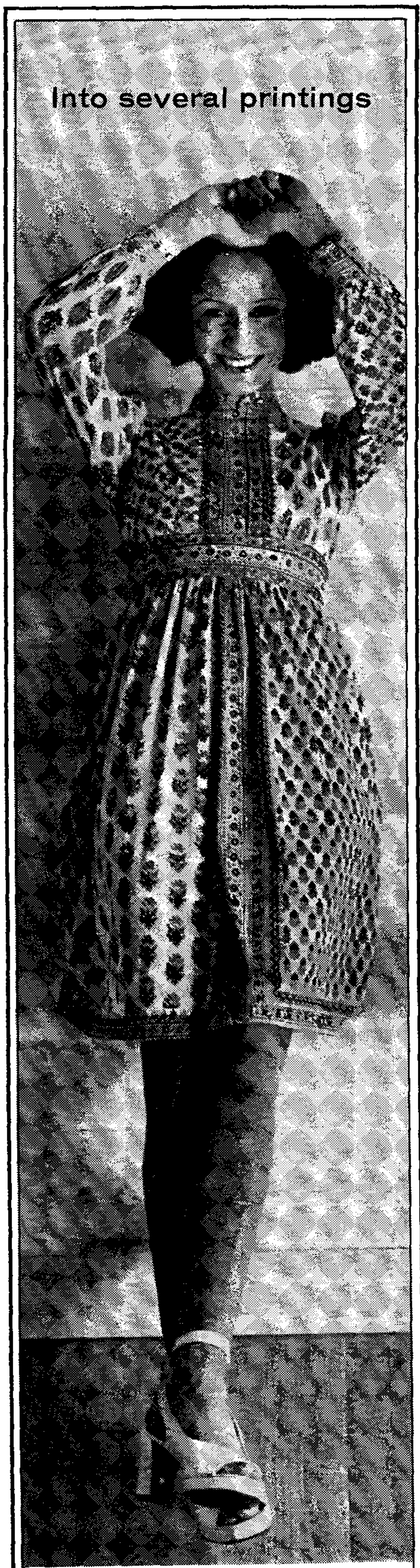

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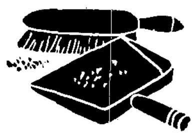
range is enormous, even for Nicol. My mind races, wondering what the Nixons will make of the Beckett, which I recall as a prolonged nihilistic shriek of despair. Lionel coughs, and says the White House isn't expecting more than a forty-five-minute act. Penelope Gilliatt, who has shown up to greet her old pal, is worried by the anti-youth content of the "Inadmissible Evidence" bit; she feels that Nicol must avoid giving aid and comfort to Presidential prejudices. She therefore makes a few discreet cuts to soften the tone of conservative crustiness that was audible in John Osborne as early as 1964—and has been much amplified since. I suggest adding a comic set piece—Robert Benchley's "The Treasurer's Report"—and Nicol agrees. Muttering in a corner, Lionel and I debate the major problems. First, can Nicol prepare and learn all this material in a week? Second, even if he can, will he, with no director to keep him on schedule? The White House engagement is important for Lionel. After eight years with one of the big agencies, he struck out on his own only six months ago, and Nicol is his most prominent client.



Evening: With Nicol to the Grill in the basement of the Roosevelt Hotel, where his backing group, the World's Greatest Jazzband, is appearing. Champagne in bulk. The nine veterans on the stand (led by Yank Lawson on trumpet and Bob Haggart on bass) are tearing into "Up, Up and Away" as if it were a Dixieland standard (though Kai Winding's trombone strikes a more modern note—early nineteen-fifties, say). You would think they were a board of jolly school trustees living out a childhood fantasy. They resemble those volatile silver-haired gentlemen who in old Hollywood musicals used to waggle their index fingers and start trucking on down when taught to jitterbug by Gloria de Haven or Madcap Michael Rooney. At the end of the set, members of the band swarm up to embrace Nicol: Bud Freeman (tenor), mistakable for a bank president or prosperous dentist; Yank Lawson, beefy and beaming; and the more studious-looking Bob Haggart, perhaps an early James Stewart part. They are as flattered by Nicol's respect as he is by theirs. He has known them for years; jazz clubs offer the only kind of night life he enjoys. During the next set, he joins them on the stand to sing "Baby, Won't You Please Come Home?" He grows exuberant in their company—this shambling cultural missionary, with his long pink face hanging out.

In the taxi home, he is reminded that this trip is an expedition into anxious territory. Three midtown offices have been bombed today.

THE CABDRIVER: Know what they should do with any guy that plants a bomb? The *'lec*tric chair. Rapists and muggers? The *'lec*tric chair. Guys who kill cops? The *'lec*tric chair. Guys who beat up prison guards? The *'lec*tric chair. They killed six cabdrivers in the last three months. Show no mercy. They'll take your life, you take theirs.

NICOL: How fantastically undesirable.

I propose—and Nicol accepts the idea—that it would help to relate his program to local reality if he were to add a few admonitory lines from Yeats' "The Second Coming," beginning with "Things fall apart; the center cannot hold."

I am staying at the Algonquin, and he drops me there at about 1 A.M. There is a wakeful light in his eyes.

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

By early-morning limo to LaGuardia with Nicol and Lionel: we are going to Washington to examine the White House—to check technical facilities, and, in general, to decide whether it rates as what the trade would call a class room. The star, swathed in overcoat and muffler, slumps in his seat, racked by bronchial paroxysms. He was out (whispers Lionel, rolling his eyes upward) until 4 A.M., none knows where.

LIONEL: If they don't like the look of us in Washington, they may cancel the whole thing. We have nothing in writing.

At the airport, the star sips a beer, obviously (in Dashiell Hammett's precise but repulsive phrase) to cut the phlegm. En route for the boarding gate, he treads with extreme wariness. Noticing that I have noticed this, he explains carefully, "I walk on my heels, leaning backwards and slightly to the right. If I tilt two inches too far"—he indicates the concrete floor—"it's a cracked skull."

Mrs. Penny Adams, spruce and wholesomely pretty in her late twenties, who is a member of Mrs. Nixon's ten-woman staff, meets the plane, and we drive to the White House. Here Mrs. Adams introduces us to Mrs. Connie Stuart, thirty-two, the First Lady's staff director and press secretary, also wholesomely pretty, and very gay with it. Over her desk there is a framed motto at which Nicol raises a startled, Alastair Sim eyebrow. It reads "Whatever Turns You

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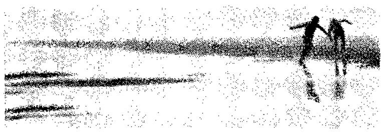

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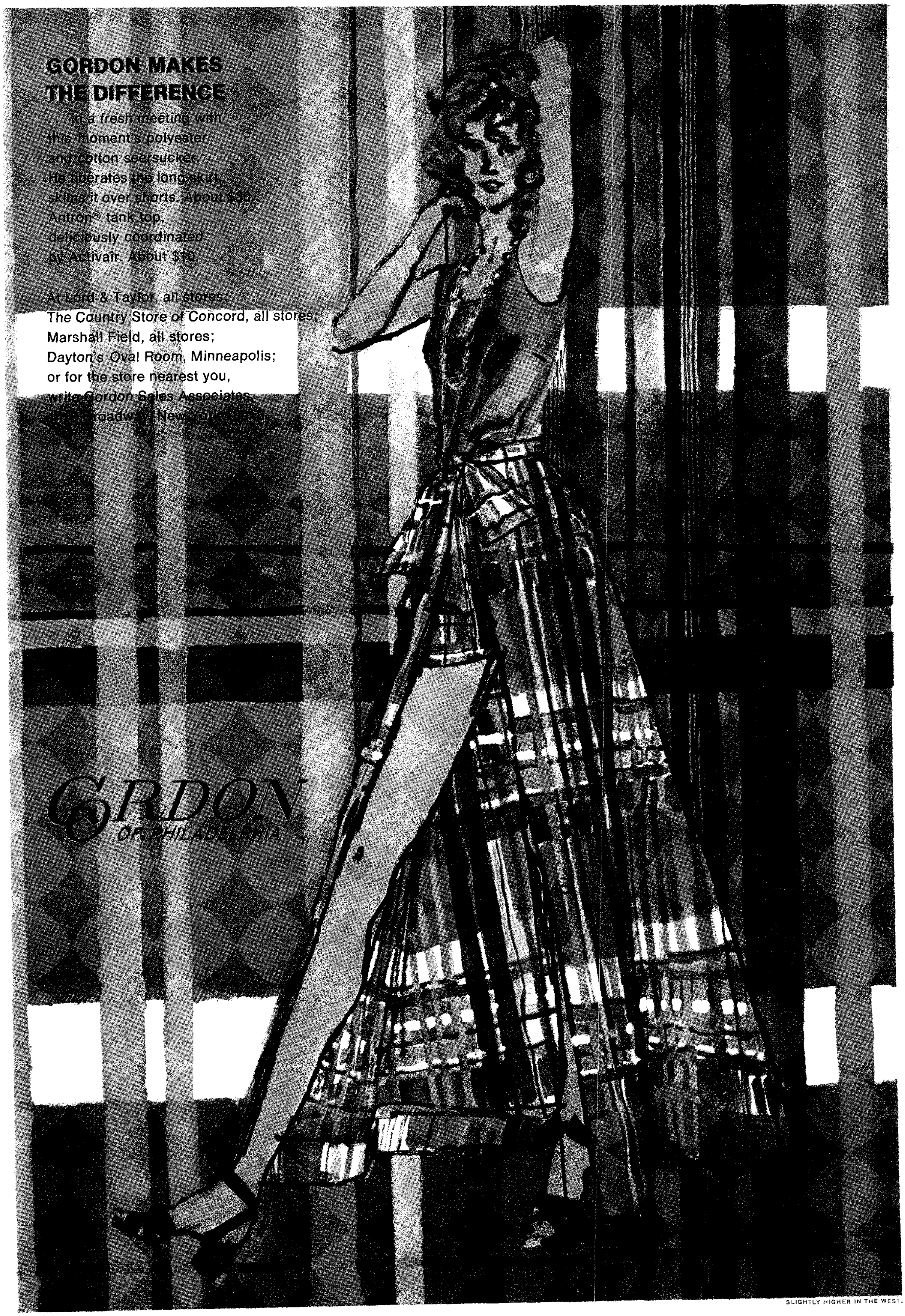

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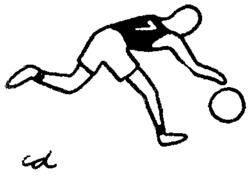
On." Penny says that Connie is a magnificent actress, or was at college. The star responds by telling a long, obscure, and totally irrelevant story about a misdemeanor he committed in the Army, involving the burning of some boxes containing kippers. Smiling a little dutifully, Connie suggests that we take a quick tour round the building.

LIONEL (*chirpily, as Connie shows us the State Dining Room*): It may not be much to look at, but it's home.

Faced with a portrait of Benjamin Franklin, Lionel observes that it doesn't look a bit like Howard da Silva. With something of a flourish, Connie escorts us into the East Room, long and rectangular, with windows at either end, where the Evening is to take place. The star at once reacts to the cavernous echo.



NICOL: The band will have a *hernia.*

LIONEL: Oh, Nicol, it could easily be—

NICOL (*flatly*): *Dreadful.*

After some debate with White House technicians, it's decided that a stage (for the band and Nicol) will be erected halfway down one of the long walls, with the audience in a shallow arc around it. Nicol and I are discussing lighting angles, with illustrative gestures, when we see two unintroduced men regarding us with heavy-lidded interest.

NICOL (*jerking his head toward them*): Secret Service. They think we're discussing angles of fire.

Back in her office, Connie invites us out to eat. As we leave, Nicol unnerves her secretary (who wasn't present during his telling of the anecdote) by laying a hand on her shoulder and murmuring in her ear, "Don't light any fires with kipper boxes."

Lunch at the Sans Souci (at the taxpayers' expense, except for two bottles of Échezeaux '62, contributed by Nicol):

PENNY: How do you feel before you go onstage?

NICOL: Elated. There's always the chance of getting that extra ingredient, that jab of adrenalin. When that happens, you do things that can scare you stiff.

PENNY: Are you good at taking direction?

NICOL: I'm the ideal subject for a director. I work from subjective to objective. I start from here (*he indents a small circle on the tablecloth with a fork*) and move outwards to here (*he draws a large concentric circle round the first*). *That's* the object of the exercise—not my ego.

CONNIE: Do you find that diet affects your work?

NICOL: I never booze before acting. I tried it ten years ago in rep and said never again. Also, I can't eat food cooked in butter or with garlic. If I do, I'm likely to vomit all over the stage.

The girls are giggly by now and propose taking us back to the office for some sherry. (*Sherry?*) Demurring, with thanks, we depart for the airport.

Cocktails at the St. Regis: P. Gilliatt feels there should be something in Nicol's program to dissociate him from Nixon. For an hour or so, he will have the ear of the most powerful man on earth. He should choose at least one item to indicate to the Pres why "people like us" do not support him. Hamlet caused the players to enact "something like the murder of my father" in front of Claudius while Horatio observed the King's looks. Similarly, Nicol should perform something referring to (though not directly about) Vietnam, police brutality, or the Black Panther shootings before the President, presumably with me standing in for Horatio. But what is the something to be? What is needed is something oblique, analogical, but nonetheless crystal clear to all present. I come up with an idea: Creon has a speech in Sophocles' "Antigone" extolling the merits of absolute subservience to authority. But the danger (and the likelihood) is that the President would miss the intended irony and take the speech straight.

Dinner at the Russian Tea Room: Several New York friends of Nicol's come up to our table and give him their reactions—in varying tones of shock and reproach—to the news that he is going to entertain Nixon. One of them calls him a "collaborator." Nicol is uneasy and starts to brood: "I should never have accepted the invitation." He is discovering the difference between being a hell-raiser and being a rebel. Because he knocks critics, uses rude words on TV talk shows, and generally goes his own way, he is regarded as an anti-system man. In reality, he is simply an anarchic individualist. But he projects individuality with such intensity that he has become, however inadvertently and in however peripheral a way, something of a symbol. It is this symbol that he is now being called on to live up to, and it upsets him.

LEONARD LYONS (*greeting Nicol, who looks distraught and barely registers his presence*): The only good thing I can say about this Administration is

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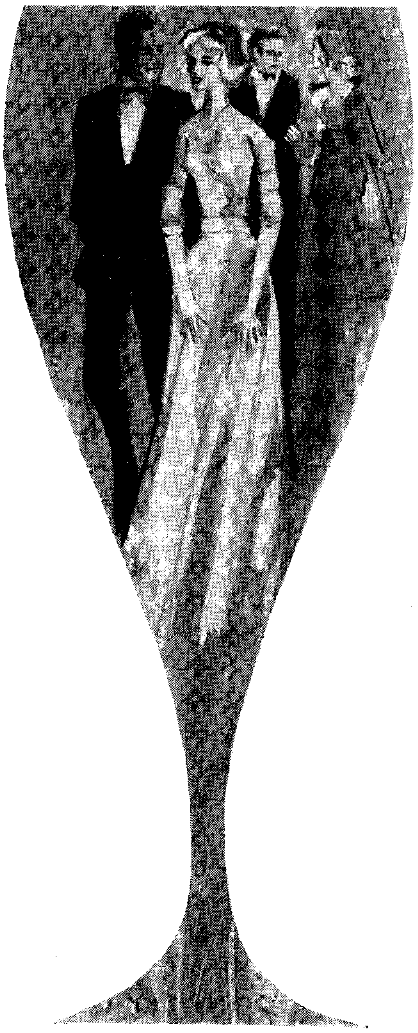

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that they've invited you to Washington.

MYSELF: Do you think he should have accepted?

LYONS: Why not? He's honoring the office, not the man.

Troubled by all this, Nicol suddenly rises and plunges out of the restaurant without a word. The experience of this evening is forcing him to make commitments, to declare himself, to *join.* Which he hates.

An hour later, guesswork leads me to seek him at Jimmy Ryan's. He is singing "Sister Kate" with a band headed by Max Kaminsky. The number over, he walks through the middle-aged audience to join me at the bar, where he introduces me to two preposterously obese men called the Bookends, for whom he buys drinks. He tells me equably that he sees no good reason to go on living, since he isn't interested in praise or acceptance or public love: "I know myself, but I don't understand myself." The proprietor of the club approaches and shakes his hand. Nicol grips my arm.

NICOL: Listen. There will be a statement. I shall make a statement at the White House.

PROPRIETOR: You're going to meet a beautiful man in Mr. Nixon. A really beautiful man.

NICOL (*paying the bill and staring at a wild-eyed, martyred-looking photo of himself by Lord Snowdon that hangs behind the bar*): Christ never looked so *hopefully* sorrowful.

A Bookend, performing a grotesque solo dance, pauses to wave us goodbye.

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

The star informs me by phone that, although he was in bed by 2 A.M., he has awakened with a throbbing pain in the liver and a strong feeling of terror: "There's so much to learn, I'm paralyzed." He will spend the morning studying the script and try a run-through in the afternoon. The significance of the day and date has not escaped him.

After lunch, pacing up and down his living room, "like a great famished wolf" (Ellen Terry's description of Henry Irving as Macbeth), he rehearses the non-musical parts of the Evening. Accusation and complaint, disgust and self-disgust are the dominant moods. The "Hamlet" bits are unmelodious harangues, but they ache with real distress. He is as fine as I remember him in the Osborne, and there is genuine pathos in his straw-clutching Willy Loman. Best of all are the Cummings poem, delicately wry, very nearly charming, and the Beckett, a staccato tirade of negation, taken at tracer-bullet speed. The latter, and the Benchley, he cannot possibly learn and will have to read. But even in the excerpts from plays he is appallingly shaky on words: unless he masters them, he will be lectern-bound and thus denied all mobility. Already it's clear that the program, including music, may top seventy minutes. More than the President bargains for, but, as Lionel says, "what are they going to do—throw him off the rostrum?"

Working out a running order, Nicol discovers that he has no finale. He wants to make "O! what a rogue and peasant slave" his climax. Hereabouts, I suggest, a hint of self-deprecation wouldn't come amiss, so we add a few lines from Eliot's "J. Alfred Prufrock":

> No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor
>   was meant to be:
> Am an attendant lord, one that will
>   do
> To swell a progress, start a scene
>   or two,
> Advise the prince: no doubt, an
>   easy tool,
> Deferential, glad to be of use,
> Politic, cautious, and meticulous;
> Full of high sentence, but a bit
>   obtuse;
> At times, indeed, almost ridicu-
>   lous—
> Almost, at times, the Fool.

An ending is found by not shunning the obvious. Nicol settles for a bushel of evergreen corn. From the Eliot he will go straight into Prospero's "Our revels now are ended. . . ."

Last night's conscience pangs seem to have abated. The individualist speaks only *for* himself; the egotist speaks only *of* himself. In Nicol there are elements of both, and they combine to precipitate a deep resistance to the idea of speaking for others.

Work is interrupted by an urgent phone call from Oscar Beuselinck, in London. A lucrative film offer has come up, requiring an immediate yes or no. His face contorted with boredom and impatience, Nicol turns it down. Somewhat wanly, Lionel remarks that his client is truly uninterested in money; if he were not, why would he come so far to do so much for nothing? He adds that Nicol recently rejected a bid of four hundred thousand dollars to play Enobarbus in Charlton Heston's film of "Antony and Cleopatra." Possessions do not attract him. As long as his food, drink, shelter, and transportation are paid for, he has no financial ambitions.

It is 4:30 P.M. Vodka sours begin to arrive; we have thus far been nipping at minor Burgundies and Valpolicella. Rehearsals are over for the day.

NICOL (*sunk in an armchair*): Ac-

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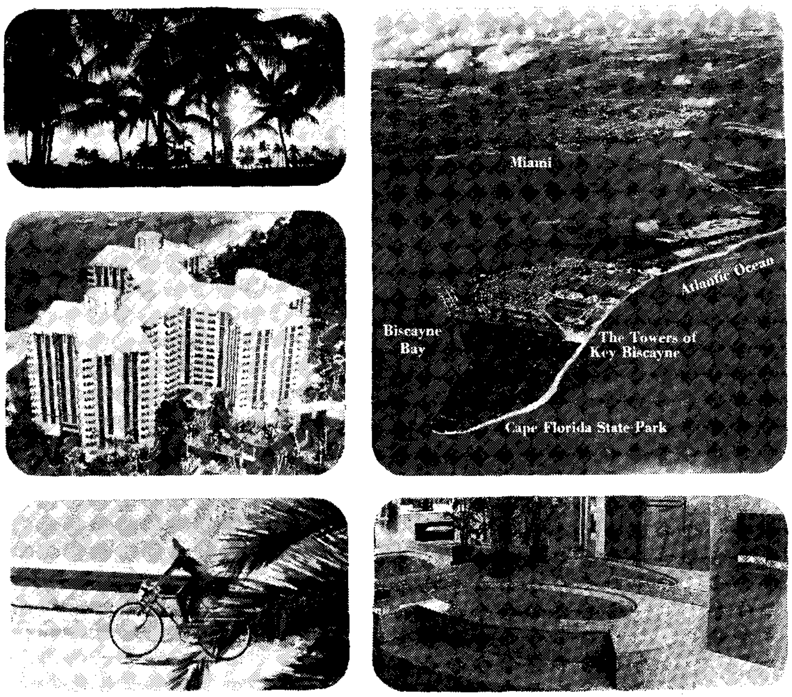

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tually, I've got about two years left to live. (*Pause*) I think I'm the most boring man in the world. I really do. People say I'm lucky because I'm free, because I can do what I like. But they don't understand. And why should they? Who can analyze anguish?

This is said ruminatively, without rhetoric, though in full awareness of the effect it is producing. Nicol, I reflect, would be a superb Dostoevski actor. And I remember how good he was as the hero of Gogol's "Diary of a Madman."

NICOL (*saturnine smile*): I believe I know how I shall end the show. (*He rises and declaims.*) ". . . and our little life—is rounded—with a sleep." (*He mimes unscrewing a bottle cap and swallowing handful after handful of pills. Rolling his eyes, he clutches at his throat and collapses on the carpet.*)

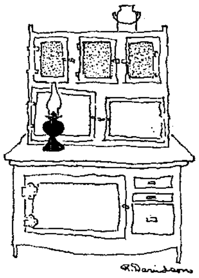
He is never exultant or euphoric. His relaxed moods are respites—temporary, you feel—from an unassuageable melancholy.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

The star has lost a morning. He was singing at Ryan's until 4:30 A.M. Telephoned at lunchtime, he claims to be learning lines: "They'll get their money's worth."

We meet for drinks at 5 P.M., and again the question comes up of the "statement" he promised to make at the White House. He says he thought of a solution last night but has since forgotten the process by which he reached it. From here he steers the conversation toward safety.

NICOL: Some people can remember rational processes of argument. I can't. What I do remember, after ten or fifteen years, is exactly how a man fiddled with a matchbox while he was talking. Nervously. Tensely. I slot it away with lots of other details I pick up about him. Then later I take them out and mix in some of myself, and then I've got something separate that I've made.



6 P.M. *First band rehearsal at the* Roosevelt Grill. The star, who has a curiously stately wardrobe, arrives in a well-cut sober checked suit and a crisply laundered shirt by Turnbull & Asser of St. James. Lawson and Haggart (of "St. James Infirmary") have written some gay and bouncy arrangements of the Shakespearean settings, and it's nice to hear the sound made by their ripping, rasping four-man front line of brass. Nicol is much intimidated by their expertise and preparedness.

He takes me to a dowdy bar on Third Avenue for whiskey sours. A large elderly Irishman in a homburg hat gravely embraces him—an ex-barman, it turns out, recently retired from another of the star's pet haunts. Nicol's best friends seem to be permanently dispersed on some kind of rota system in unfashionable bars throughout the major cities of Britain and the United States, patiently awaiting the off-chance of his arrival. I have entered many such places with him, seldom without running into an unsurprised lifelong chum. It is always a man, and the man is never an actor.

We dine at Lionel's bijou bachelor pad in the East Sixties. Nicol's frame of mind as he contemplates next Thursday veers abruptly between groundless optimism and extremely rational pessimism. Immediately after eating, he departs alone on some unspecified mission. Lionel shrugs helplessly and shakes his head.

Later. Johnny Carson's special guest (with tinted glasses and deep décolletage) is Richard Harris, whose career and personality in many ways parallel Nicol's. Both played the title role in productions of "The Ginger Man" (Harris in Dublin, Nicol in London); both starred in (different) adaptations of "The Diary of a Madman;" both have reputations for tumultuous living and warlike imprudence; and both fancy themselves as pop singers. Following the traditional practice of such maniacs on talk shows, Harris says that seriously, Johnny, all kidding aside, he is a devout believer in discipline and professionalism. Tremulously, he sings a new Jim Webb song, looking almost as vulnerable as, and undeniably lovelier than, Nicol. He then announces that he's about to direct and star in "Hamlet," but, Johnny, he says, although that's a hell of a big responsibility, he puts just as much of the old discipline and professionalism into singing one song on the "Tonight Show." Applause. I can *just* imagine Nicol saying that, but (to his credit) it would not sound so sincere.

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

Lionel opens the door as I arrive at his apartment for lunch. He says nothing but looks alarmed. I walk past him and halt, seeing why. Standing before us is his client, regarding me with a bemused and rueful smile. On his forehead is an egg-sized bump surrounded by contusions. The injury proves to have been self-inflicted.

NICOL: I got back to the hotel

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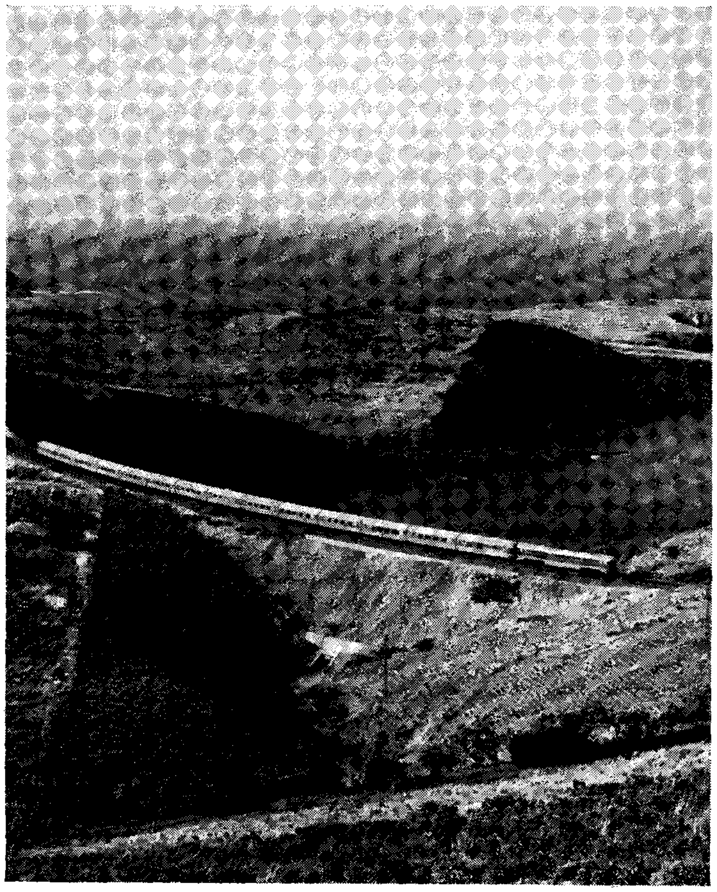

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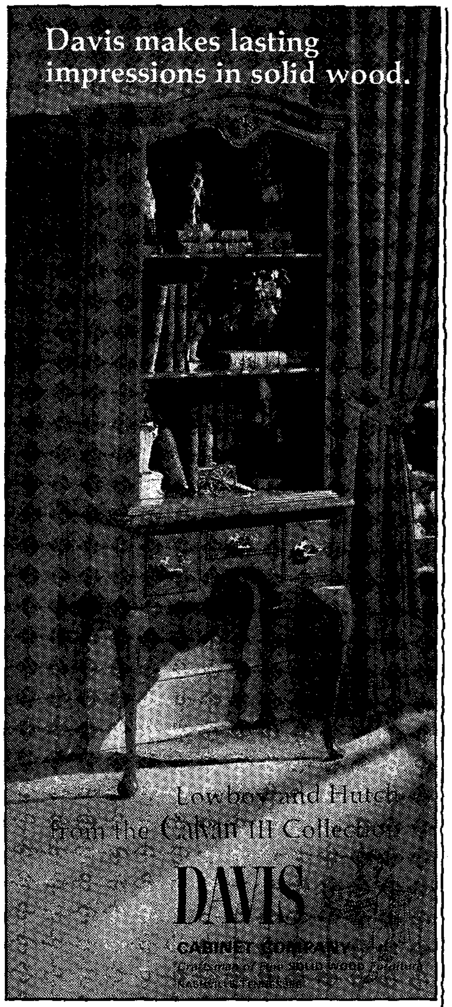
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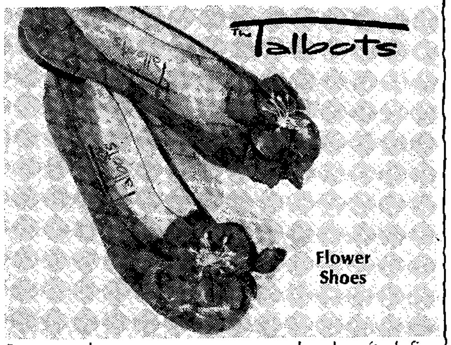

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at 5 A.M., smashed out of my mind. While I was taking off my trousers in the bathroom, I fell and knocked myself out. The moral is: If you are smashed out of your mind, keep your trousers on.

Over lunch:

NICOL: If I ever write an autobiography, it will be called "Waif and Astray."

LIONEL: That sounds very sweet.

NICOL (*dangerously*): When I sound sweet, that's the time to avoid me.

In the afternoon, we drink Puligny-Montrachet while Lionel plays records for Nicol—camp collector's items, nostalgic tracks from prewar England featuring people like Evelyn Laye, Dorothy Dickson, and the crooner Al Bowlly. Nicol requests a novelty number called "My Canary Has Circles Underneath His Eyes" and says he hopes to record it with Yoko Ono and John Lennon. "John was going to come to Washington with us, but he couldn't get an American visa." The absence of Lennon is due to his criminal record: he was found guilty in London of possessing pot. Lionel puts on a series of Noël Coward records. All thought of rehearsing evaporates. Nicol venerates Coward.

NICOL: That's the right way to sock it to them.

By "them" he means guarded people, prudent people, anti-impulse people, those whom he sometimes calls simply "the foe." He listens raptly to the famous duologue between Coward and Gertrude Lawrence in "Private Lives" and then lets slip a remarkable pronouncement on his craft.

NICOL: Acting is nothing but reminding people. That's all it is. It's reminding people of things. (*Pause*) Sometimes, if it's very good, it can even remind them of themselves. (*Pause. More Puligny-Montrachet*) I don't think I shall ever act onstage again.

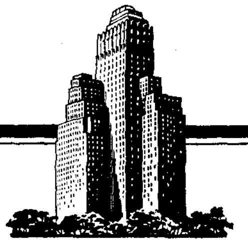
LIONEL: How about next Thursday?

NICOL: I mean after that. (*Pause. Then, portentously, as if imparting great news in strict confidence*) It's going to go over *very* big.

LIONEL: Of course it—

NICOL: Like the *biggest lead balloon ever*.

MY impressions of Monday and Tuesday, March 16th and 17th, are blurred. The handwriting in which I kept my notes begins to lurch about, and sentences of glaring banality are inscribed in a large, childish hand and doubly underlined—an infallible sign of powerful alcoholic sedation. The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reason is that during this period of our association I tried to "drink for" Nicol, as I phrased it to myself. When he ordered wine, I would consume as much of it myself as I discreetly could, in order to keep his energies fresh for rehearsal. I do not know whether this unselfishness was of any real use to him. It nearly crippled me.

From these two days, then, I retain only fragments—a few meals *in toto*, certain courses of others, moments of elation and apprehension during rehearsals, self-questionings about what constitutes a fatal dose of Alka-Seltzer—the one constant factor being a steady drain on Manhattan's reserve supplies of wines imported from the communes of Vosne-Romanée and Flagey-Échezeaux. One clear memory is of part of a lunch at the St. Regis, with Nicol, in the grip of a "massive depression," telling me that more than anything else he needs a woman in his life, but "I'm too destructive, I make too many demands." He says he is sexually obsessed and states that throughout the run of one London production in which he appeared he made love to the leading lady twice every night in the dressing room *during the performance*. (His italics.) To alleviate gloom, he either gets smashed or takes tranquillizers (Valium for preference) to make him feel nonchalant and uncaring, so that the obligatory question—"What's it all for?"—temporarily recedes.

Other flashes from the lost days: Nicol repeating, with unconvincing assurance, "Don't worry, I'm going to wing it;" Nicol aware that he is terribly unready for Thursday, yet remaining stubbornly inert in the face of crisis, daring the lightning to strike; Nicol briefly coming to life, baring his teeth, and galvanizing everyone, even the band, with his delivery of the Osborne, the Miller, and the Beckett. "He really is a fabulously talented man," breathes Lionel, and, after the Beckett, Bud Freeman walks up to shake his hand, saying, "You're one hell of a tenor-sax player." (I see what he means; it's like listening to the worrying, burrowing frenzy of Paul Gonsalves playing "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue" on a good night several years ago.) Freeman continues, "I thought I knew you pretty well, Nicol, but, *man*—as the jazz people say—that was *something else*."

Now, on D Day minus 2, it's discovered that Nicol has no technical staff, no one to light the act or cue the musicians. A dumbstruck Bob Haggart is told that he must compose and arrange a short overture and half a dozen

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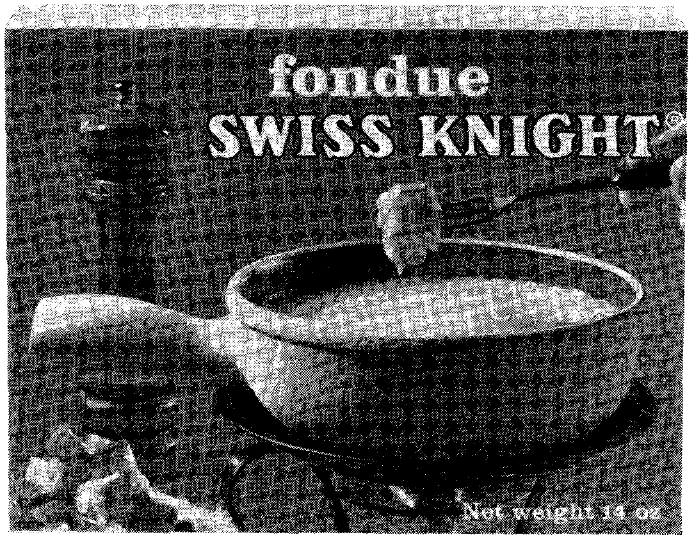

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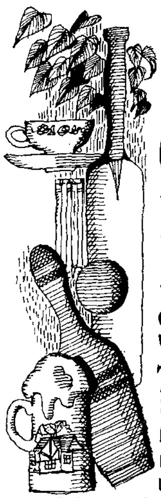

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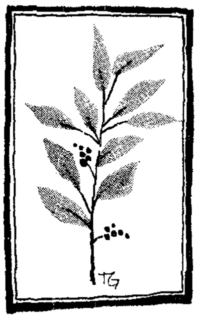
mock-Elizabethan music bridges. Midnight phone calls produce a young stage manager, Warren Crane ("He's worked the White House before," Lionel says. "He was there with Helen Hayes during the Johnson Administration"), and Rosaleen (Ro) Diamond, Lionel's pretty twenty-five-year-old secretary, who has just bought her first mink coat in time for the Washington trip, is roped in to prompt and give music cues. In the early hours of Wednesday morning, the makeshift crew has its first conference with Nicol, at the St. Regis. The Échezeaux intake becomes particularly onerous during this session. Voices emerge from the general clamor: "I shall snarl Willy Loman right in the President's face." "Will Tricia be there? We have four-letter words in the Beckett and the Cummings." And Nicol, summing it all up: "If this thing works, it will be like a Heath Robinson machine giving birth to a baby."



Footnote: William Heath Robinson (1872-1944)—English cartoonist who, like Rube Goldberg, designed elaborate mechanical devices for carrying out useless tasks.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

I AWAKE at noon like a dwarf refreshed. To the Roosevelt Grill for a full rehearsal before an invited audience of band members' wives and friends. Nicol fluffs repeatedly, misses laughs, and sends line after line winging out into the dark only to fall (as Noël Coward said, in a comparable plight) wetly, like pennies into mud. Perversely, the star regards this disaster as propitious.

NICOL: Tomorrow night will be something disquieting, disturbing, *weird*.

I dine with him at the Ground Floor, on Sixth Avenue (all glass and black leather, the kind of place you'd expect to find in the Michelin guide to Alphaville), and bring along a guest: the beautiful black actress and writer Ellen Holly. During the meal (about half a crate of Échezeaux '61), Nicol proposes marriage to her, not wholly unseriously, and is gently turned down. Richard III's "Now is the winter of our discontent" goes into the act, replacing Malvolio's letter scene, which had died an especially grisly death at the Roosevelt. A Columbia Pictures limo, with an elderly, battered-looking P.R. man in attendance, rushes the star and me to LaGuardia. On the way, a car rams into our rear fender ("My Jonah hangup again," says Nicol breezily), and time is squandered on the rituals of recrimination and name-taking. We just make the last flight to Washington, passing through the departure lounge at a brisk trot.

Another P.R. man, physically indistinguishable from the first, awaits us at Washington with an identical limo. Nowadays, Nicol's life is upholstered throughout with such aids and easements, shock-absorbent cushions against the brute impact of reality. There will always be a limo, and someone will always pick up the hotel and restaurant bills. If America does this for an actor whose screen credits include no American movies and no box-office smashes, what on earth does it do for Jack Nicholson? It's approaching 2 A.M. when we pull up at the Mayflower Hotel. I blench to hear Nicol talking about nightcaps and asking (in the words of B. Brecht) the way to the next whiskey bar. The P.R. man tells him that Washington goes to bed early and that the bars are all closed, and the star seems to have reconciled himself to sleep when suddenly, in pursuit of a hunch, he crosses the street, walks a few blocks, and finds the only bar in town that is still open. The P.R. man fades, leaving the night to Nicol and to me.

Inside the bar (which is underlit to the point of inducing disorientation), I begin to hallucinate. Brain damage of some rare kind appears to have set in. Not without panic, I point out to Nicol that the walls are covered with close-up color transparencies of the female pudenda. From the middle of the room, where we are sitting, Nicol squints through the darkness, but to no purpose: he says there is *nothing there*. I hesitate to go over to the wall and check, in case he is right. I recall Laurence Olivier's warning to me before I left London: "Be careful, or that man will magic you." I had better believe it. He is looking straight at me, smiling curiously and nodding. At my urgent request, we finish our drinks and go. I am aware, as we do so, of all those flamboyant mirages shimmering obscenely away in the gloom, and I half-close my eyes. (On a subsequent trip to Washington, I retraced my steps and shyly revisited the bar. It is marvellous what tricks exhaustion and an overheated imagination can play with travel posters of the Canadian Rockies.)

Over at the hotel, Nicol sends out for hamburgers. We go up to his suite,

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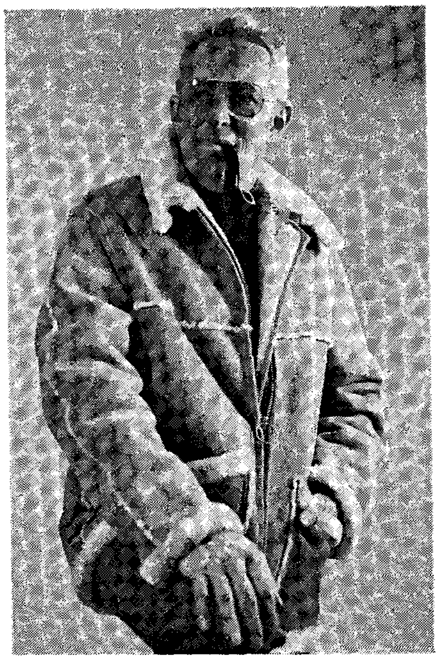

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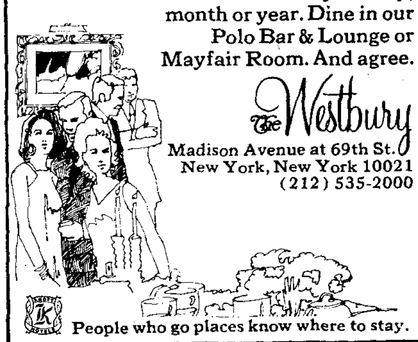

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where the food arrives thirty minutes later. There is Dom Pérignon on ice in his sitting room, but I manage to restrict our consumption to one bottle. At 3 A.M., I drag myself away. Outside in the corridor stands a little signpost pointing to Nicol's door. It reads "The Puerto Rican Hospitality Suite." I hope to God it is there tomorrow.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

Donne may have got it wrong. Perhaps some men are islands. Fuelled from within himself, responsible to nothing and no one outside himself, impervious to all social, moral, and professional pressures that seek to influence or modify his behavior, Nicol is at least a formidably isolated peninsula, a sort of human Mont Saint-Michel. Today will see him wind-swept and wave-battered.

I return to the Puerto Rican Hospitality Suite (sign still there) at 11 A.M. Stripped to the waist, the star is pacing up and down, villainously hung over. Inexplicably, Lionel and Ro have failed to turn up. This does not lighten his mood.

NICOL: Today I can be a monster. No more of this lovable crap.

A newspaper is delivered. Nicol peers at the front page, freezes, and passes it to me in silence. I read that the Cambodian government has collapsed; Sihanouk has been deposed while away in Peking. So Nixon has a crisis on his hands. There's nothing a man needs more than a cultural soirée when his Southeast Asian policy is falling apart. I notice that I am cowering in a corner. Nicol broaches a bottle of champagne. I point out that I am disintegrating fast, but he cajoles me into taking a glass. I emerge a little way from my corner.

NICOL (*seriously*): Do you think I drink a lot?

MYSELF (*ever the plain speaker*): On the whole, yes.

NICOL (*struck by this new idea*): Funny. I always thought I drank less than most people. (*Pause. He muses.*) You see, I have low blood pressure and a low blood-sugar count. Sometimes I get terribly dizzy. I drink to prevent myself from collapsing. (*The thought entertains him.*) Listen, if you ever see me staggering about on the verge of collapse, just *rush* the alcohol to me. Preferably champagne—it has a high sugar content. I have to have it to avoid passing out.

The phone rings. Lionel and Ro have arrived, and I go down to join them in the coffee shop. They missed the early flight because (Jonah strikes again) the car in front of theirs crashed

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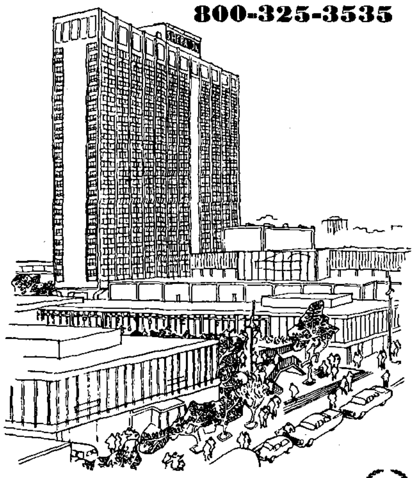

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on the way to the airport, holding up traffic. Lionel is in a state of petulant fatalism, complaining about everything to cover up specific forebodings about the hours ahead.

LIONEL: The rooms here are *too crucial.* You ought to see mine. I walked in so quickly I nearly fell out of the window. The only way to enter that room is blindfolded, with a sleeping pill in one hand.

He reminisces about Nicol, dwelling morbidly on examples of erratic behavior.

LIONEL: I was there when he walked offstage in the middle of the first night of "Hamlet" in Boston. It was incredible. He flung a goblet clear across the stage and marched off. The management argued with him for twenty minutes, and then he came back and told the audience he didn't feel at his best and he thought they were being cheated. He said they could have their money back if they wanted. As it happened, they didn't, so he went on with the show.

In the minds of both of us, I can see, there is a fear that something of the sort may occur tonight. Accompanied by Ro and the star—all four of us thickly wrapped against the bitter spring weather—we limo off to the White House for a final rehearsal.

LIONEL (*airily, glancing out of the window*): Wonderful to be back in Philadelphia.

A White House guard stops us as we enter.

GUARD: Are you the entertainment?

NICOL: I beg your pardon?

GUARD: I said are you the entertainment?

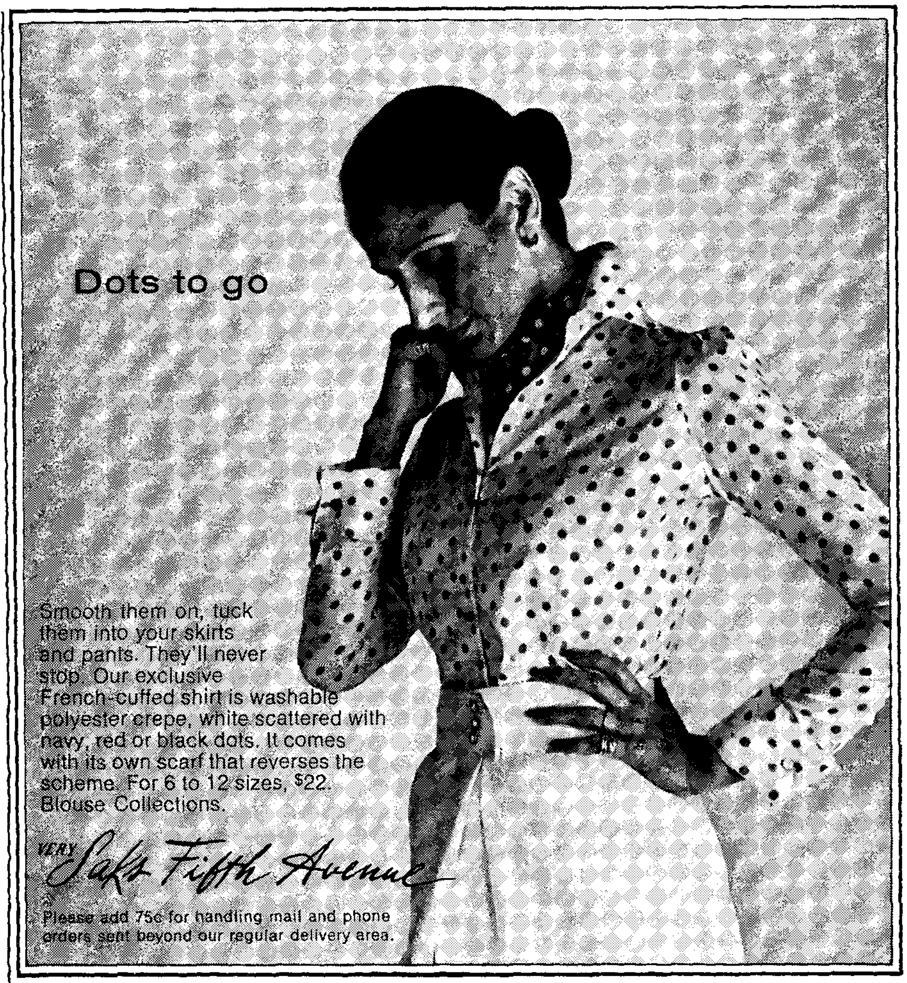
NICOL (*utterly dulcet*): Yes. To be exact, *I* am the entertainment. In just one moment, a dove will escape from my hip pocket and I shall pull the flags of all nations out of my mouth.

We are admitted to the building, which today suggests a large Swiss hotel in the off season—all uniformed flunkeys and no guests. Another guard takes us to the East Room, where the band and the stage manager (whom we greet thankfully) have just arrived. Security men are searching their instrument cases. One of Connie Stuart's assistants brightly points out to Nicol that the East Room was where Lincoln's body lay in state. He thanks her for the information. After one look at the stage, he says it must be enlarged. While this is being done, we move into the adjoining (and aptly named) Green Room for a word rehearsal.

LIONEL: Take your coat off, Nicol.

NICOL: No, thanks, I'm not staying.

He wanders over to the wall and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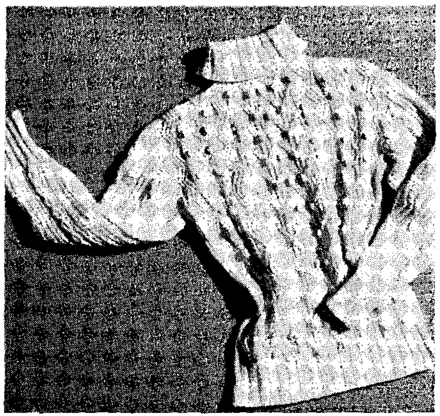

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stares at it for a moment, hands deep in pockets.

NICOL: Lend me a pen, will you?

LIONEL: What for?

NICOL: I want to write up here, "For a good time, call TE 1-9941."

I sit in for the President. Nicol makes a sweeping entrance, bows, mimes pulling a pin from a hand grenade with his teeth, and blithely tosses it into my lap. Soon his flipness fades and the rehearsal stops. He says he wishes he were with his parents in Scotland—"anywhere but here." There is a great lack of yeast in his spirit; sadness weighs him down. (What is he mourning?) Lionel chatters on, wondering what Nicol is going to wear tonight. The answer is gray slacks, a blue sweater, and a silk scarf. By now, it is 3 P.M.; he goes on at eight, and still the stage and the lighting aren't ready. A further nerve-scraping half hour passes before the run-through can begin.

It goes smoothly enough and lasts sixty-four minutes. The star, rightly, performs at no more than half pressure. He is unsmiling but as relaxed as only the profoundly hung over can be. The first quarter hour is filmed for television.

"And now," says Lionel, "for the female Mafia." Nicol, who has not eaten all day, has agreed to be interviewed for the social columns by lady members of the Washington press corps.

The first question is so outlandish that it stuns him into silence. "Would you say," asks a gray-haired woman, "that Shakespeare was the James Bond of his day?" Lionel bustles over to help him out.

GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN: What was that first song that Mr. Williamson sang?

LIONEL: "Sigh No More."

GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN: What show is it from?

LIONEL: "Much Ado About Nothing."

GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN: Is that a musical?

SECOND GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN: I'm going to London next week, Mr. Williamson. Is it possible to get Chinese food in London?

NICOL: Oh, yes. Quite good Chinese food.

Five-thirty. We rush back to the hotel to change. Lionel and Ro cravenly disappear to their rooms, leaving me to keep watch over Nicol. Up in Little Puerto Rico, the phone rings. It is Lionel, hissing, "Force him to eat something." I call room service. While I am ordering deep-fried butterfly shrimps, a cork pops and Nicol offers me champagne. Taking a selfless decision, I bring up the name of Tony Richardson, which I count on to provoke a monologue and/or an impersonation. It provokes both ("Tony Richardson," he begins, "symbolizes power without love"), thereby diverting the star's attention from what he is drinking to what he is saying, and enabling me to dispose of all but one glass of the bottle. Room service is not at its most appetizing, and when we depart for the White House at seven-forty (Ro in her mink, Lionel and I in dinner jackets), Nicol's stomach is vacant apart from a glass of champagne and two bites of shrimp encased in congealed fat.

This time, the man on the door recognizes us.

GUARD (*beaming*): Good to see you again, Mr. Nicholson.

Lionel winces. Nicol's eyes are beady, but his smile does not flicker. We deposit him backstage, with much patting on the back and gripping of the upper arm. Braided guards escort us into the East Room, where most of the audience—two hundred and ninety in all—has already arrived. The band sits red-faced and black-tied on the rostrum. Lionel turns to me with a fixed grin and says, "I am petrified." We slump in the second row and consult the guest list. Many of the names are those of campaign contributors, here to receive their social reward. John Chapman, the drama critic of the *News*, is among the journalists present; so, exuding loyalty, is Ted Kalem, of *Time*. John Freeman, the British Ambassador (and former editor of the *New Statesman*), has a ringside seat. Top Columbia Pictures brass is represented by Leo Jaffe, the president of Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. Other notabilities include the daughter of the Australian Prime Minister, a granddaughter of President Cleveland, Vice Admiral Rickover, Henry Cabot Lodge, David Eisenhower, and, of course, Henry Kissinger, bleeper no doubt in pocket. Also Dick Cavett, the actor Lee Bowman, and Harold Smith, of Harold's Club, Reno.

To prolonged applause, Mr. and Mrs. Nixon (he in tuxedo, she in something long and pink) enter and seat themselves front center. The President rises and tells the story of how he heard about Nicol from Harold Wilson more than a year ago.

NIXON (*hands clasped before him*): . . . So because I couldn't stay to see that star in London, that star is here tonight—the man the Prime Minister says is the greatest Hamlet!

The President returns to his chair.

Nicol ambles on, takes a bow, and launches into the address to the players.

Nicol: Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you . . .

Silence. He has dried. Five long seconds pass before he completes the sentence, with a phrase that could hardly be less appropriate.

Nicol: . . . trippingly on the tongue.

He covers up well, making it look as if it were Hamlet, and not he, who was groping for the right words, and he finishes the piece without further problems. The band now contributes to the tension by wrecking the first musical bridge. Two howling clinkers are blown, and I can see Bob Haggart's face, bug-eyed with shock. The first song ("Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind!") finds Nicol still uneasy. But in the Osborne and the Cummings he starts to hit his stride. Command enters his voice. There is still, in his stance vis-à-vis the audience, a nonchalance that seems to border on contempt, but it is electric, corrosive contempt, a passion not to be tamed or ignored. (Nobody can complain that he doesn't follow Hamlet's instruction to "show scorn her own image.") "To be or not to be" is first-rate: the morose, familiar lines bite into the mind like acid into metal. The songs—especially "Dunsinane Blues" and the "Winter" lyric from "Love's Labour's Lost"—are warming the audience up. The President is seen to smile, and rounds of applause are coming, still faintly, but frequently. Lionel and I are going with the flow, even enjoying ourselves.

Then we both jerk forward, hearing Nicol say, "Things fall apart." They certainly do. He has jumped straight from "Love's Labour's" to Yeats, omitting the Miller, the Benchley, and two whole songs. The band is baffled. We are sweating, realizing that at this rate he will end twenty-five minutes early. The champagne churns within me. When he gets to the end of the Yeats, there is a frozen pause, after which he says, "Howard, all I need to set my table is fifty dollars a week"—and we relax. He has spotted his error, gone into "Death of a Salesman," and put the derailed Evening back on its tracks. From here, everything builds superbly. The Miller extract—Willy's lament for the heroic days of salesmanship and his old pal Dave Singleman ("And by the way he died the death of a salesman, in his green velvet slippers in the smoker of the New York, New Haven & Hartford, going into Boston"), and his bewildered rage at a business ethic that discards spent human beings like gar-

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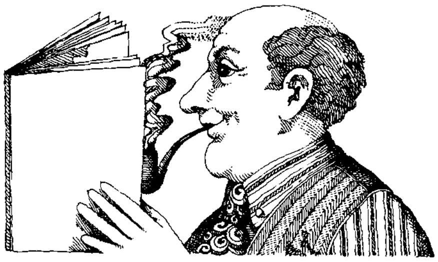

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bage—comes fervently across. I'm surprised what a punch Miller still packs for an audience like this, especially when the part is played, as now, entirely without sentimentality.

Nicol finds the right note of insanely jovial pedantry for Benchley's bumbling Treasurer. "O! what a rogue and peasant slave" is given in a splendid tempest of self-laceration. But it's with the Beckett that he and his material really fuse. The sound we hear is that of a man (or at least a being) in his last extremity, living on the very margin of existence:

> alone in the mud yes the dark yes sure yes panting yes someone hears me no no one hears me no murmuring sometimes yes when the panting stops yes not at other times no in the mud yes to the mud yes my voice yes mine yes not another's no mine alone yes sure yes when the panting stops yes on and off yes a few words yes a few scraps yes that no one hears no but less and less no answer LESS AND LESS yes
>
> so things may change no answer end no answer I may choke no answer sink no answer sully the mud no more no answer the dark no answer trouble the peace no more no answer the silence no answer die no answer DIE screams I MAY DIE screams I SHALL DIE screams good....

The way Nicol punctuates this into lucidity is a technical tour de force. I have never heard his voice more hypnotic: as it rises from a wintry monotone to a high, urgent, terrified whinny, you would think he was a medium, possessed and shaken by an unquiet demon. Nixon's face is rigid and expressionless, but he is staring straight into Nicol's eyes. I don't think he has ever heard anything quite like this before.

Finally, the star gives us his dying fall—"J. Alfred Prufrock," followed by Prospero's farewell to the revels—and bows. Applause crashes over him, wave upon wave. He withdraws, returns to cheers and bravos, shares them with the band, withdraws again. Lionel stops clapping for a second to give me the thumbs-up sign. Against all the auguries, his wayward client has pulled it off. He is the Entertainment.

The audience moves into the next room, where there is a hot buffet. A big Williamson fan, Cavett enjoyed the show immensely; so did Kissinger. Like many others, John Freeman was particularly knocked out by the Beckett. Outside in the hall, the guests are shuffling along in line to shake the Nixons and Nicol by the hand. I receive an exceptionally slow and searching wink from the Entertainment. The President—his face like a leather briefcase that has seen long service: you ex-

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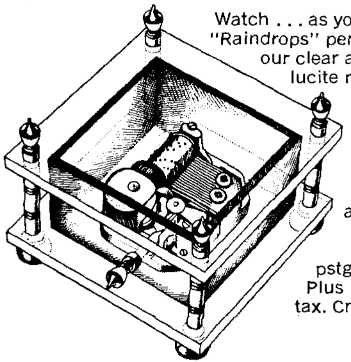

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pect to find a pocket for ballpoint refills behind one ear—says he thought the Miller and the Osborne outstandingly memorable:

Nixon (*with the admiration of one pro for another*): It's so wonderful the way he changes so quickly. One thing ends, something completely different begins. And to think that your Prime Minister started it all.

Passing on, I hear Mrs. Nixon whisper to Nicol, "Stand on the carpet, not the stone floor. It's easier on the feet." In the State Dining Room, the Marine Corps Band is playing the score of "Hair" in strict ballroom tempo. Careless of tomorrow, Lionel, Ro, and I drink champagne while the fiscal atlantes and caryatids of the Republican Party swing and sway. After a few minutes, the Marines quit the stand, to be replaced (at Nicol's request, we learn) by the W.G.J. The Chamber livens up; some portly jitterbugging is observed. The Nixons smile briefly in at the door, then retire. No slight intended—they are notoriously quick off the mark to Blanket Bay. And tonight, no doubt, the President will be anxious to know who is minding the store in Phnom Penh. Nicol, looking ten years younger, grabs the microphone.

Nicol: This should be an evening that swings. We should all have fun and get boozed. And I hope to God we don't wake the people upstairs.

He dances fancifully with Ro, Mrs. Ted Kalem, and others, sings "Darktown Strutters'" and "I Can't Give You Anything but Love, Baby," and even borrows Yank Lawson's trumpet to blow a stammering but heartfelt chorus of "Tin Roof Blues." The whole place begins to vibrate like a Hamburg dance palace on Saturday night. It is half past midnight before Nicol is ready to move. His departing gait is regal.

Nicol: We leave with dignity. With our own dignity. (*He stands on the steps of the White House and contemplates the sky.*) Tonight this is our town, Thornton Wilder! Do you hear? Our town!

A private bus takes us and the musicians to a jazz club called Blues Alley, where Charlie Shavers is playing. The W.G.J. sit in, and for two hours Nicol blows, sings, drinks, and spreads himself. Chewing a cigar, sardonically grinning, rolling his rheumy eyes, he looks like a Mississippi gambler on a winning streak. I reflect: How limited is the range of things he wants to do with these moments of riot. All he asks of triumph, all he means by relaxation and release, is the opportunity to drink a few great wines from the Champagne district and the Côte de Nuits, and to go to places where small-group mainstream jazz is played late at night.

At 3:30 A.M., Nicol, Lionel, Ro, and I bring hamburgers back to the Puerto Rican Hospitality Suite and eat them with more champagne. Nicol's hair clings to his skull like damp ginger worms.

Nicol (*holding up a half-eaten hamburger*): So this is what it was all for.

Ro (*ecstatically phoning a friend in California*): Listen, I just spilled Dom Pérignon over my mink coat!

Nicol: Nixon said he could take the program twice over. "You must come and do it again," he said.

Lionel: Why did you do it in the first place?

Nicol (*with mock-heroic shrug*): A challenge.

He has come three thousand miles to please and impress a man who was not, perhaps, all that interested in what he was doing, or all that capable of being pleased and impressed in those regions of human response where Nicol's talent is best equipped to strike. All one can say is that by his unpaid exertions Nicol has enabled Nixon to keep a diplomatic promise.

A fortnight later, the following letter arrived in Nicol's mail:

Dear Mr. Williamson,

Your magnificent performance in the White House on March 19th surpassed even the exceptionally favorable advance notice which I had received, and I want to express my thanks to you once more for your generous gift of your time and talent. Your presence made a spectacularly successful evening deeply memorable as well.

With best wishes,
Richard M. Nixon

Friday, March 20

PRESS reactions are good. The New York *Times* says that Nicol "shifted mood, pace and tone with seeming ease," and Richard L. Coe, of the Washington *Post*, reviews the act in the style of *Variety:*

> Known for mod treatment of classics as well as savvy way with smart stuff (T. S. Eliot and Samuel Beckett, Nobel '69), thesp cooked up novel touch.... Williamson, using characteristic North Country nasal twang, feels for and finds total meaning of excerpts from "Hamlet," "Richard III" and modern material.... Construction of act is ingenious, nicely fitting counterparts of today with classic stuff.... Sock hits, finding star (despite high speaking voice, thesp resonant low register) wholly at home as singer, include Macbeth follow-piece, "Dunsinane Blues," and encored "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind."...

Nicol celebrates by giving lunch at the Jockey Club to Lionel, Ro, me,

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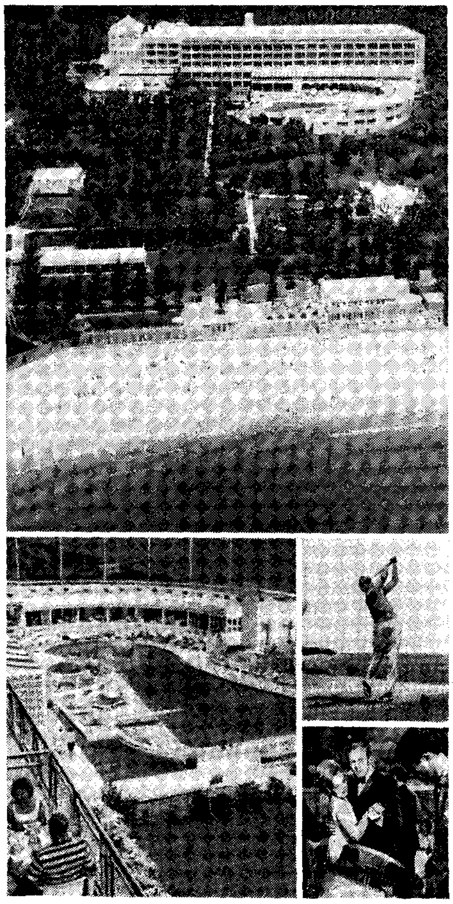

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and a couple of Washington friends of mine. The occasion is pleasantly hysterical (Taittinger Blanc de Blancs, Château Margaux '61), with the Entertainment at his most ebullient. Just before going on last night, he tells us, he contemplated chickening out by *pretending to be under the impression* that the invitation was to entertain the Nixons *and nobody else*. Most of the restaurant is watching as he mimes what he planned to do: stride in beaming at the President; come to an affronted halt as his eyes register the presence of *other people;* sniff querulously; raise eyebrows; turn on heel; march straight offstage and out of the building. He meditates on what he actually did.

NICOL: I don't know why it happened, but it happened, and I stand by it. Why they asked for it, Christ only knows. Why they got it, Christ only knows. *But they got it.*

Together with Ro and Lionel, he has to leave for the airport. They are returning to New York; I am booked on a later flight direct to London. As he gets into the limo, one of my friends, a young woman who has never met him before, shakes his hand and says, "You're a very extraordinary man, Mr. Williamson."

NICOL: Lady, the mome rath isn't born that could outgrabe me.

THAT evening, I sit with a beer at Dulles Airport, trying to exorcise Nicol from my consciousness. I have been too close for too long. But there is no escape. In a corner of the bar, on a TV set badly in need of adjustment, he comes looming through a snowstorm of video tape to sing "Dunsinane Blues":

> "Now's the time for you to be—
> A wary 'un:
> I wasn't really born, it was a—
> Caesarean. . . ."

No, the barman says, he isn't allowed to switch off the set, which now adds a slow rolling-frame effect to its repertoire. Dozens of Nicols float before my eyes: Will the line stretch out to the crack of doom? He looks supremely *buoyant in* his *blizzard;* I, on the other hand, feel drained and enfeebled, a mere husk of a man. How much (I wonder) of Nicol's neurosis is a deliberate, expertly adopted pose? On the whole, actors are not the compulsive neurotics we take them for. Many of them come from idyllic and unbroken homes, where they were idolized by their parents. They seek (and will go to any lengths to obtain) the same central position, the same applause, the same devout attention in

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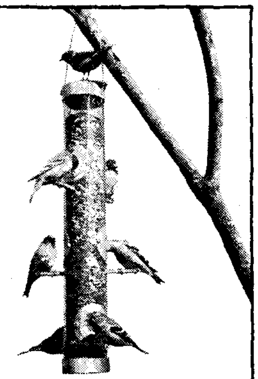

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adult life. These things, to use behaviorist language, are their reinforcers. No, actors are not crazy, nor are they compensating for emotional neglect. They are simply reënacting golden childhoods. Remove the reinforcers, however, even temporarily, and what one gets is that other Nicol, sunk in accidie, of whom I've had so many glimpses this past week.

I buy a paperback by Simon Raven ("Friends in Low Places") to read on the plane. Just as I am settling down, with my usual sense of pleasurable loathing, into Captain Raven's archaically structured world, a sentence brings Nicol vividly back to my mind: "Mark had an acute sense of self-preservation (an attribute which is often very strong in second-rate performers and does much to explain their mediocrity). . ."

Whatever else he is, Nicol is not a second-rater.

THE last time I saw him was in May, 1971, when we had another of our lunches at the Étoile in London. On this occasion, the part I had to offer him was King Lear. The answer was no, as it had been when I approached him with an assortment of other roles sixteen months earlier. He said he was no longer interested in being "the greatest actor of my generation, and all that jazz." Although he had made a film, he had not appeared before a live audience since the White House date, more than a year before. It is not inconceivable that Richard Nixon saw Nicol Williamson's last stage performance.

"THE individualist," says B. F. Skinner, in "Beyond Freedom and Dignity," "can find no solace in reflecting upon any contribution which will survive him. He has refused to act for the good of others and is therefore not reinforced by the fact that others whom he has helped will outlive him. He has refused to be concerned for the survival of his culture and is not reinforced by the fact that the culture will long survive him. In the defense of his own freedom and dignity, he has denied the contributions of the past and must therefore relinquish all claim upon the future."

—KENNETH TYNAN

•

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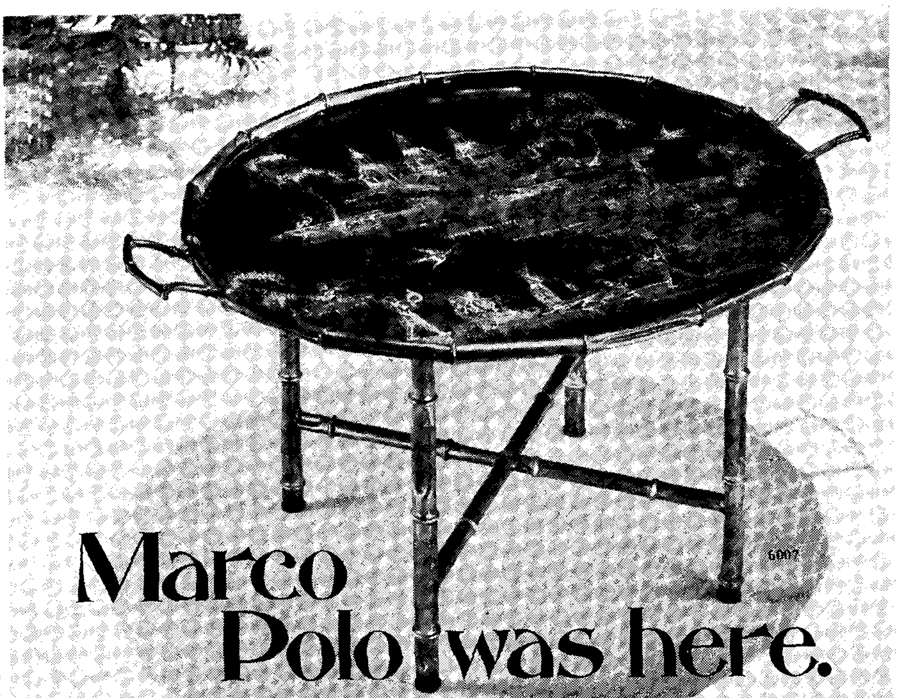
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THE THEATRE

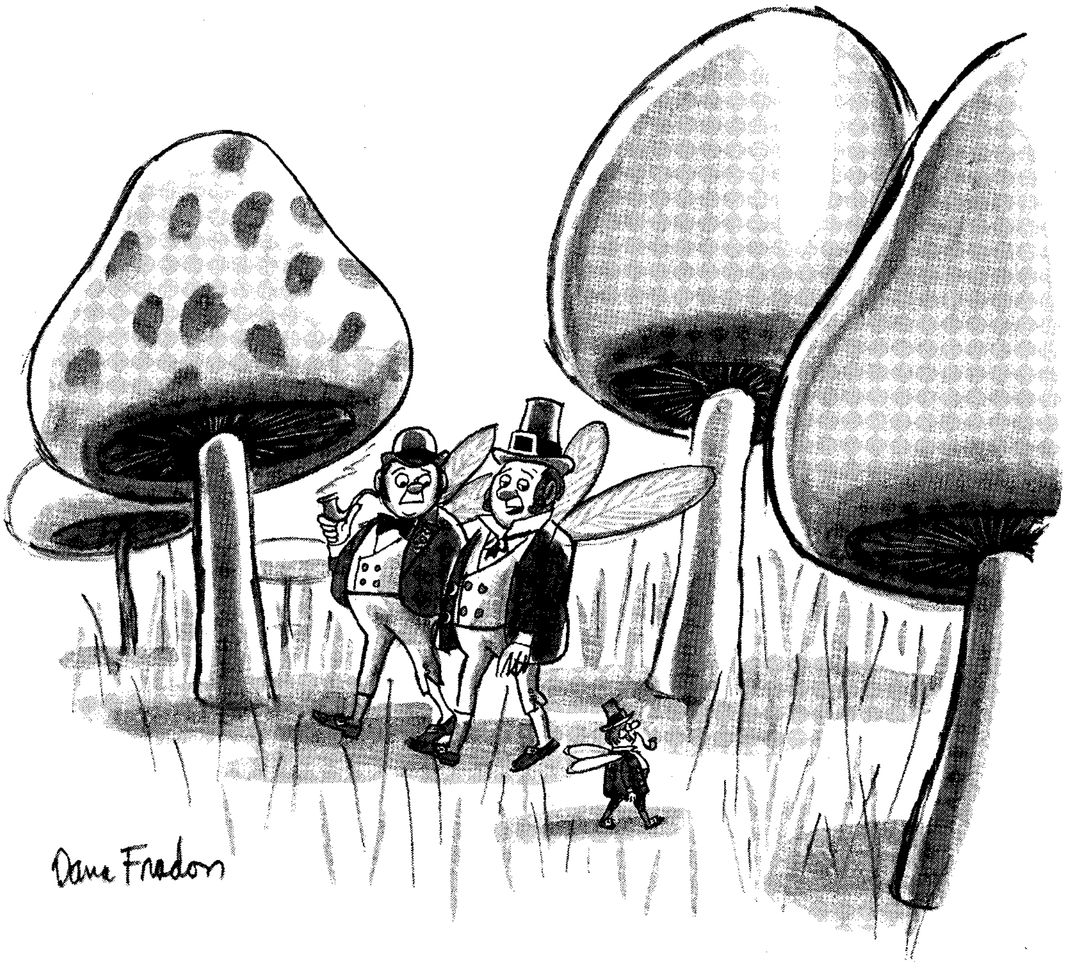
USES OF THE UNREAL

If there were such a thing as a question of justice in aesthetics, surely it would strike us as unjust that while a tragedy that is ill-played may yet be very well worth seeing, a farce must be played almost to perfection or we will have very little patience with it. I resist the temptation to speculate on why this should be so, save to note that in tragedy we are invited to discover likenesses between the characters and ourselves and therefore to share their failings and their fate, and in farce, on the contrary, we are kept at a distance from the characters and gain our pleasure precisely from *not* sharing their failings and their fate, and this difference permits a certain all-in-the-family carelessness of production that is acceptable in tragedy and repugnant in farce. In respect to strictness of standards in both planning and execution, the writer of farces approaches the performer of magic: the ace of spades he is about to draw out of my ear had better not be seen tucked in his cuff.

Georges Feydeau's "There's One in Every Marriage," at the Royale, is a diabolically clever cat's cradle of criss-crossed social and sexual relationships, and it succeeds to the extent that it presents a surface immaculate in its remoteness from real life. None of Feydeau's *fin-de-siècle* Parisian flirts may lay claim to being human, or the jig will be up; moreover, the working out of the improbable intricacies of his plot must be achieved at the highest possible speed, on the principle of the gyroscopic top, which spins steadiest when it spins fastest. The uses of unreality are many, and Feydeau employs them with the icy elegance of an astrophysicist calculating distances "between stars on stars where no human race is." If the present production, by the Stratford National Theatre of Canada, doesn't quite master the play, it is in part because the cast lacks that sort of elegance. It fails to be single in tone, and from time to time a character wantonly secures a laugh by methods that are his own and not those of the ensemble.

Despite flaws in the production that ought to have proved fatal, enough Feydeau survives to provide an amusing evening. You can scarcely fail to admire that adorable creature Roberta Maxwell, in the role of a faithful wife goaded to the point of committing a vengeful infidelity; Peter Donat, as the dashing womanizer who hopes to lure her into bed; Richard Curnock, as her unexpectedly virtuous husband; and Tony Van Bridge, Joseph Maher, and Jack Creley, as, respectively, a rip-roaring cavalry surgeon, a devoted servant, and a predatory bachelor (though it seemed to me in the case of Mr. Creley that the prey of the character he embodied would be unlikely to be women). The ravishing sets and costumes are by Alan Barlow, and the direction is by Jean Gascon. The play was adapted and rendered into workmanlike, if not witty, English by Suzanne Grossmann and Paxton Whitehead.

Edward Bond's "Narrow Road to the Deep North," at the Vivian Beaumont, comes closer to being farce than the author may have intended. Like any writer of farce, he keeps us at a distance, sassily mocks our expectations, insists that his characters are types and not individuals, and denies them any effect upon the world about them; nevertheless, the emotion behind his play is not one of moral nihilism but one of passionate indignation. Mr. Bond is a serious man, and it is ineptitude that betrays the seriousness of his intention and gives his anger a tinny comic ring. Taking the form of an allegory laid in what the author—with a kittenishness unworthy of his thirty-six years—describes as "Japan about the seventeenth, eighteenth, or nineteenth centuries," and having as its central figure the poet Matsuo Basho, the play affords Mr. Bond an opportunity to plead with the human race to pull itself together and do better. It is a plea that, surprisingly, we are always eager to attend to, but the basis of Mr. Bond's plea proves familiar to the point of being sophomoric/soporific: military dictatorship is evil, imperialism



"Saints alive, Clancy! Am I seeing things?"

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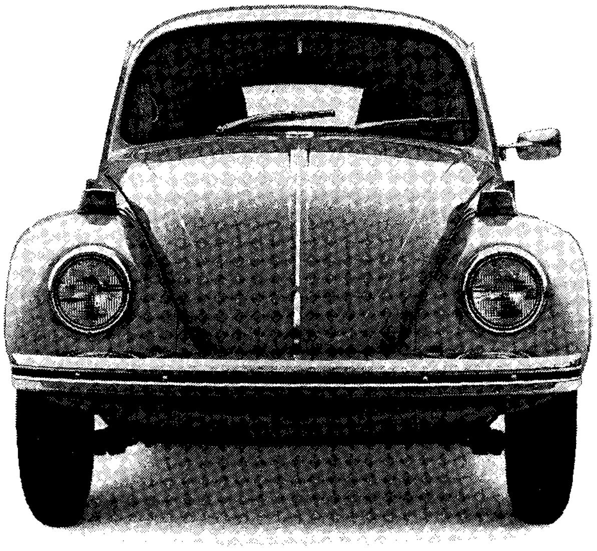

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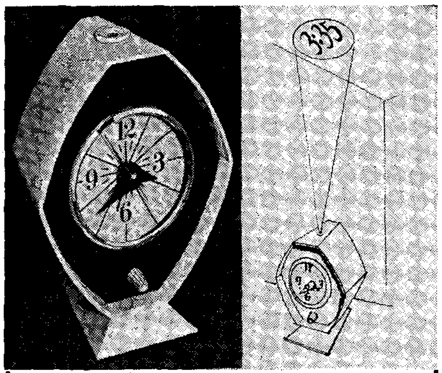

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is evil, Christianity is evil, experience teaches nothing except that it teaches nothing (a lesson always learned too late, in the Deep North as elsewhere), and to die quickly by one's own hand is nobler than to die slowly by nature's. These postulates, with all of which I happen to agree, are hammered down our throats again and again, and since no imaginable contrary postulates are given a chance to be heard, we end up having undergone a tiresome exercise in neo-Brechtian palaver; old Basho could have fitted it cozily into seventeen syllables.

For once, I have nothing but praise for the Repertory Theatre of Lincoln Center; the company has given a poor play a brilliant production. The sets are by Douglas W. Schmidt, the lighting is by John Gleason, and the costumes—well worth the price of admission all by themselves—are by Carrie Fishbein Robbins. Of the large cast, let me single out for praise Robert Symonds, as Basho; Cleavon Little, as a murderous dictator; and Andy Robinson, as a disciple in unflagging pursuit of a master. The blood with which the stage is liberally besprinkled throughout the evening is, I am relieved to say, synthetic—a product called Nextel, furnished by the 3M Company of Minneapolis. What I would like to know about it but am afraid to ask is why it is called Nextel.

—Brendan Gill

OFF BROADWAY

Blight

"Rosebloom," by Harvey Perr, which opened last week at the Eastside, is a mannered and pretentious reworking of old themes. The play as a whole is a pain—or at least gave me one—but, having said that, I must also say that it is occasionally funny and, for what it is, pretty well done. What it is is an acrid and, perhaps unconsciously, very sentimental comedy about the bitterness and misery and anger that smolder beneath the domestic surface of a Jewish family named Rosebloom. There are four characters. The mother, a nervous type in her middle forties, continually fiddles with her makeup and rarely stops talking, referring to herself, more often than not, in the third person. ("Listen to your mother; she's not always wrong," and, at one admirable moment, "Well, your mother better get back to her eyes.") Her sensitive son, a cripple in his twenties, is confined to a highly symbolic creaky wheelchair, and, along with all his other troubles, has to embody the dramatist's

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point of view. His wife, a funny and truly original character, in a delightful performance by Regina Baff, is a far-out type who keeps her nose in a thriller during her mother-in-law's prattle and then, when the coast is clear, lights up a pink joint and, in bursts of impatience and temper, shadowboxes all over the room. During the first act, these three are waiting for the husband-father of the family, who has just been released from prison (probably symbolic, too) after serving twenty-six years for armed robbery. In the second act, he has joined the group. The plot is all but nonexistent.

The production, under Jered Barclay's direction, is quite elaborate, with bright lights for actual conversations and action and dimmed lights for private musings of one kind and another, often self-pitying or savage, and for imagined action. Merrill Sindler's setting—the living room of the young Roseblooms, its walls covered with flashy, eye-catching posters—is right and helpful. As a dramatist, Mr. Perr has a keen ear, some skill in shaping lines, and a knack for using dirty words to comic effect, but when it comes to dealing with emotions he seems to have done little exploring or probing on his own. He plays it safe time after time, relying on audience recognition for his laughs. All his audacity is theatrical, and much of that is unwarranted by his threadbare ideas. Nevertheless, he does get laughs. There is no doubt that he knows what he is doing; I just wish he were doing something else. The characters, daughter-in-law aside, are all Jewish stereotypes, and they are so portrayed by Sylvia Miles, Ron Rifkin, and Harold Gary. —EDITH OLIVER

•

The prime minister said Canadian subsidiaries of U.S. companies must operate "in accord with Canadian public interest." Otherwise, he added.—*The Wall Street Journal.*

Is that a threat?

•

Here are the bare stones of the pyramid of power that runs our nation. —*From the dust jacket of "The Almanac of American Politics," 1972.*

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[*Governor John Love, quoted in the Denver Post*]

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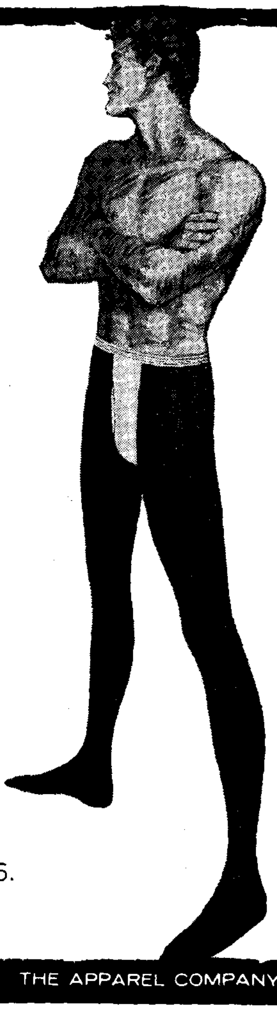

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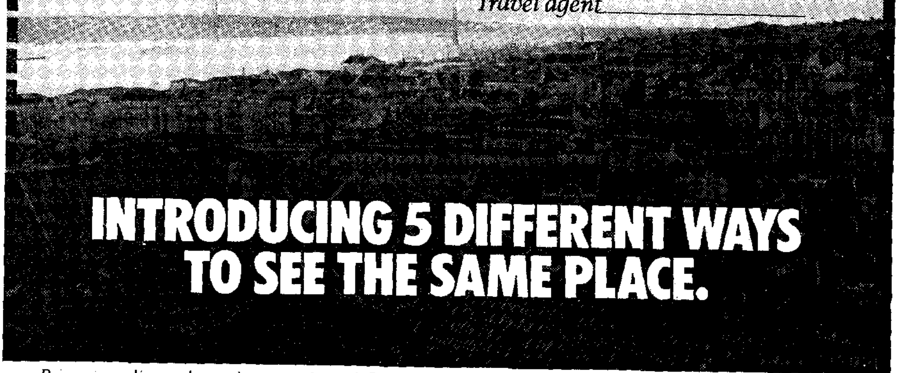

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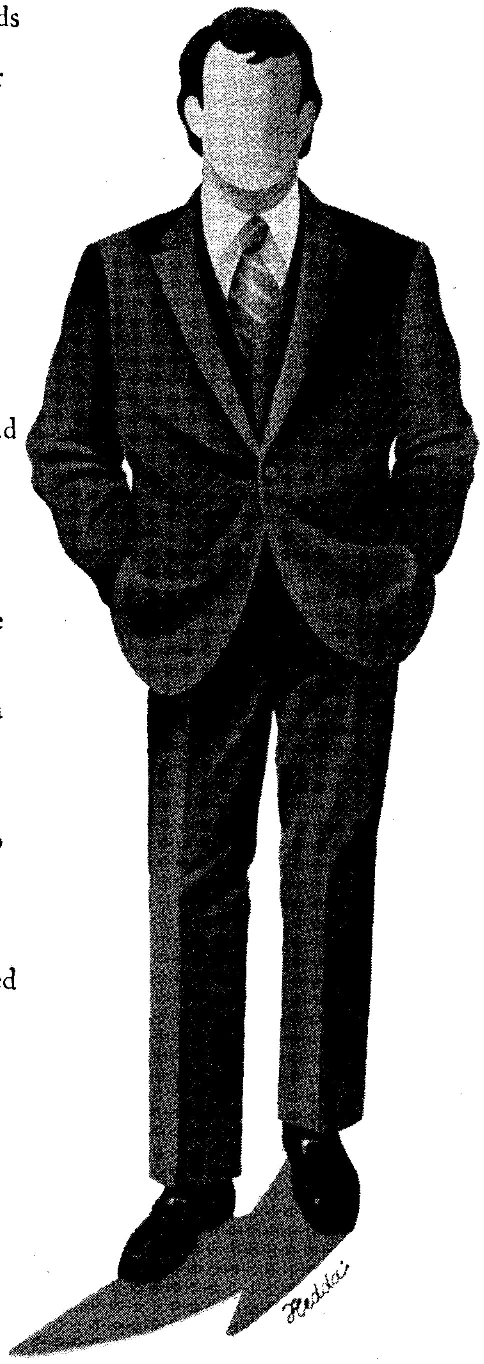

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ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

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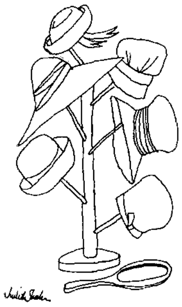
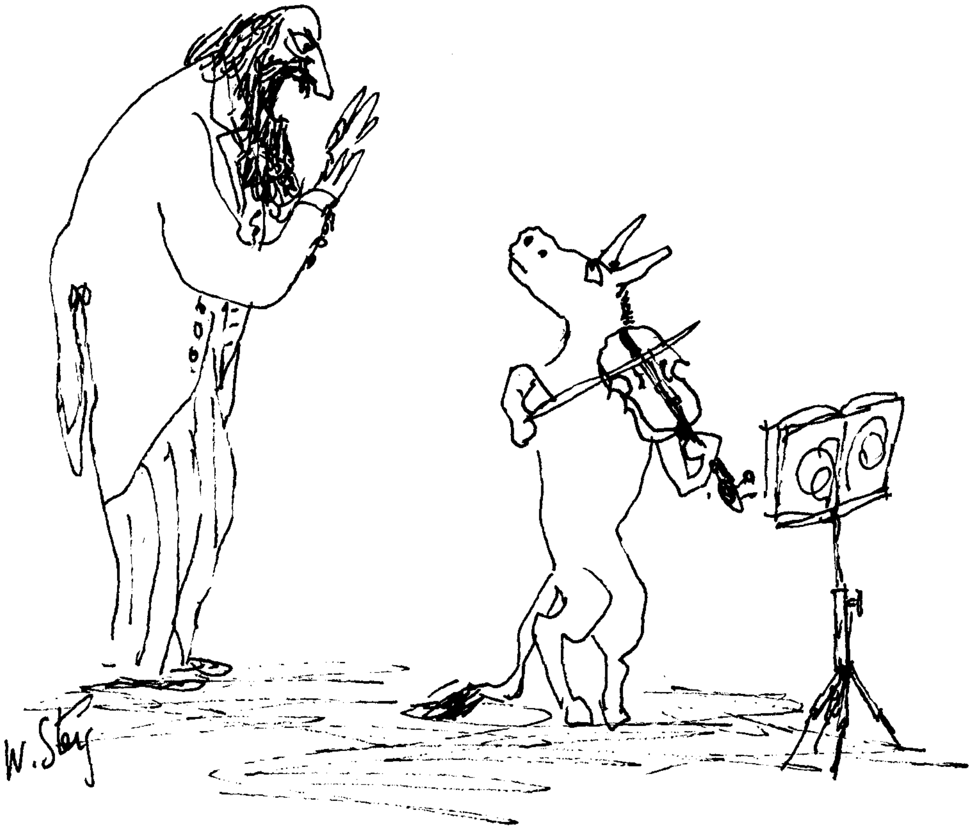


THE sixties, years of the ardent extrovert and the airy prodigal, are now even further behind us. We nestle deeper into a decade that is emerging as an age of caution, a time to contemplate burned fingers behind the screen of domesticity. For many months now, those who chart consumers' souls, such as publicists and market researchers, have been observing this retrenchment; they have dubbed it the Return to the Hearth. It is this withdrawal, in part, that is closing plays and restaurants and making the sales of cookbooks soar. It leads magazines concerned with fashions in clothes (the preoccupation of spendthrifts and partygoers) to look enviously at periodicals that sail along on menus, homemade toys, and a decent number of smart little thoughts. It accounts for a current craze for games—not simply the humble Parcheesi and Monopoly but committed, mature packages with titles like Society Today, Couples, and Who Can Beat Nixon? In this new age, socialites find it de rigueur to claim that they never go out; if they chance to break with their custom, they are not *seen*, lengthily, in clubs and other public places but glimpsed as they scurry shyly to the teeniest of dinners with the most intimate friends. Whether it was recession or the fear of crime that did in nights on the town, they are more or less a thing of the past. People are staying at home. In the newly long, lamp-lit evenings, men are boning up on car maintenance and trying out that new Hungarian recipe. And many women in this country—some forty-five million of them, by recent count—are getting out the sewing machine and running up some clothes.

The industry that caters to this last activity—makers and distributors of cloth, sewing machines, paper patterns, braid, zippers, thread, buttons, and so forth—is absolutely booming. Annual sales of these, the raw ingredients of glamour, now amount to some two billion three hundred million dollars—a figure that puts the home-sewing industry high up on the nation's list of rapidly expanding businesses. Nearly half the customers are those fêted, magpie creatures on the gilded side of thirty, and the ranks of these spenders are ceaselessly being swollen by young girls who learn to sew. There is no discernible reason that this prodigious mushrooming should ever cease. Unlike those purely manual forms of needlework which are enjoying new popularity, dressmaking does not seem to be a fad. And its renaissance is neither as surprising nor as purist as the revival of other handicrafts, like crochet, macramé, rugmaking, embroidery, and—strangest, least relevant of all—needlepoint. Few people can remain unaware that these humble, age-old crafts have now been consecrated as symbols of technology spurned, individualism asserted, and "creativity" triumphantly vindicated. Some people have even come to wonder whether the function of these crafts as balms to the psyche doesn't count for more than their usefulness. Dressmaking is different. The seamstress is never so absorbed by the mystic satisfactions of her labors that she loses track of her practical, wearable goal. And she is willing, in this pastime, to join forces with a machine.

In its present glittering, if unexpected, new dawn, the home-dressmaking industry has been firmly shaking its former pinchpenny dependents from its petticoats. The new dressmakers, surveys reveal, are in every way the opposite of provincial, dowdy, and beaten down by child rearing and poverty. Besides being young, they are well educated and relatively well off. And, whatever their reaction to fashion in stores or periodicals, they know that they want it to be present in what they make. Five years ago, it was almost impossible to find fashion in pattern catalogues; sizes of patterns differed according to the manufacturer, and a size 10 in a pattern was generally far larger than a size 10 in a shop; and the fabric available to the determined seamstress was all too often stacked in dusty corners, and was there only because no manufacturer of dresses could use it. All this has changed in the past few years, with the customer. Sizes have been made uniform, and are no longer designed to flatter the outsized; pattern books have come to look more like fashion magazines than those magazines themselves; and textile companies have come to understand that the private customer deserves significant attention.

Beyond her liveliness, sophistication, and willingness to buy, the new dressmaker represents millions of different levels of experience, talent, strength of purpose, and taste. There are practitioners who delight in running up a skirt for the price of a hamburger, and others who will spend large sums on costly fabrics. (The woman of modest means with a taste for the luxuries of linen, fine wool, silk, or lush velvet had better make the dress herself.) Some shoppers in the TV-dinner, painting-by-numbers class were drawn—at least



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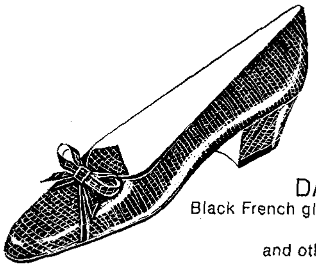

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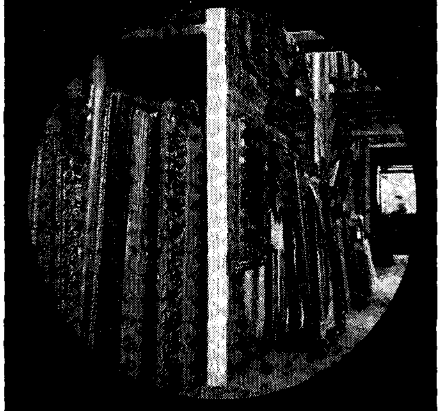

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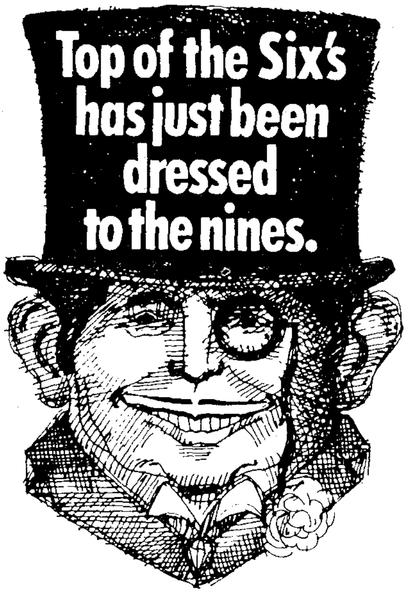
briefly—to kits known as "pre-cuts," which are pieces of fabric cut out by a manufacturer and packed up with all the required thread, buckles, and designer labels, so that all that remains to the "artist" is to set up the sewing machine and whip down a couple of seams. More adventurous adherents of the art, whatever they think of the role of the couture, will devour any kind of technical tips about reproducing the techniques of its ateliers. These women, in greater numbers than ever before, are making coats—binding buttonholes, putting collars in by hand, and searching for exactly the right sort of canvas interfacing. Such perfectionism has led to the popularity of, for instance, a suit from the house of Dior that is to be found in the current catalogue of Vogue Patterns and that consists of a tailored blazer and trousers—both presenting knotty problems of fit and finish. Between the two extremes, there are all those women who looked at the T-shirt dresses, the simple ankle-length skirts, and the straight-legged pants in their wardrobes, and, reflecting on the high cost and poor quality of these garments, saw no reason not to have a bash at making their own.

The new dressmaker may not be poor, but she takes a pride in being canny. She is more than just a shopper; she is a consumer. As such, by definition, she is always on the point of clambering on some barricade or other. In the opinion of the consumer who has turned to sewing, the ready-made-clothing industry has gone too far. She has watched as prohibitive labor costs have driven manufacturers to use increasingly shoddy materials and slapdash techniques. She is enraged by the price asked for what is often—in shapelessness, built-in shabbiness, and uniformity—merely capitalism's version of the Chinese worker's suit. And she has learned that the garment made at home will usually be cheaper, better-fitting, and more carefully finished than its equivalent in the stores. The quality of ready-made clothes can only continue to decline; as long as the respect for quality persists—and quality is gaining new fans in unexpected quarters—the star of home sewing must rise.

The home dressmaker may be in revolt against one industry—and probably against others as well—but she has no quarrel with the men who provide her with sewing materials. The home-sewing industry rests firmly on a framework of close, benevolent, respectful, and continuous contact with its customers. This was true in past decades, and it remains true in the present aggressive and vigorous phase of the busi-



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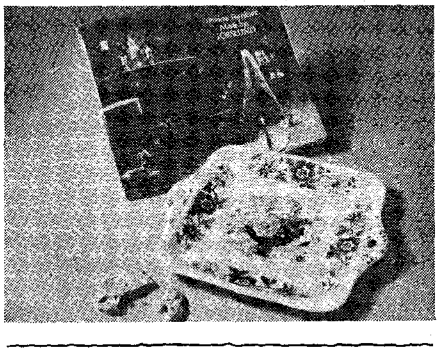

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ness. Although a policy of responsibility was settled on as much in the interests of profit as out of decency, to observe it in action is still encouraging. No good can come of trapping the sewing customer with slogans or cheating her with packaging. The ignoramus and the gull hold no charms for the salesmen of home sewing. There is no value in the customer who buys one box of pins, a single paper pattern, and a length of the wrong kind of cloth; she will only get discouraged with her efforts and stray from the fold. It is her lifetime allegiance that must be courted and her knowledge and confidence that must be promoted. The people who sell sewing direct their considerable energies, accordingly, to education.

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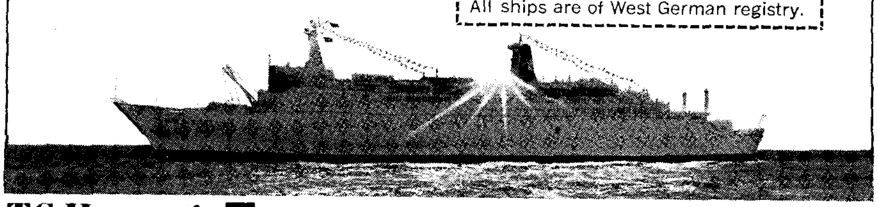

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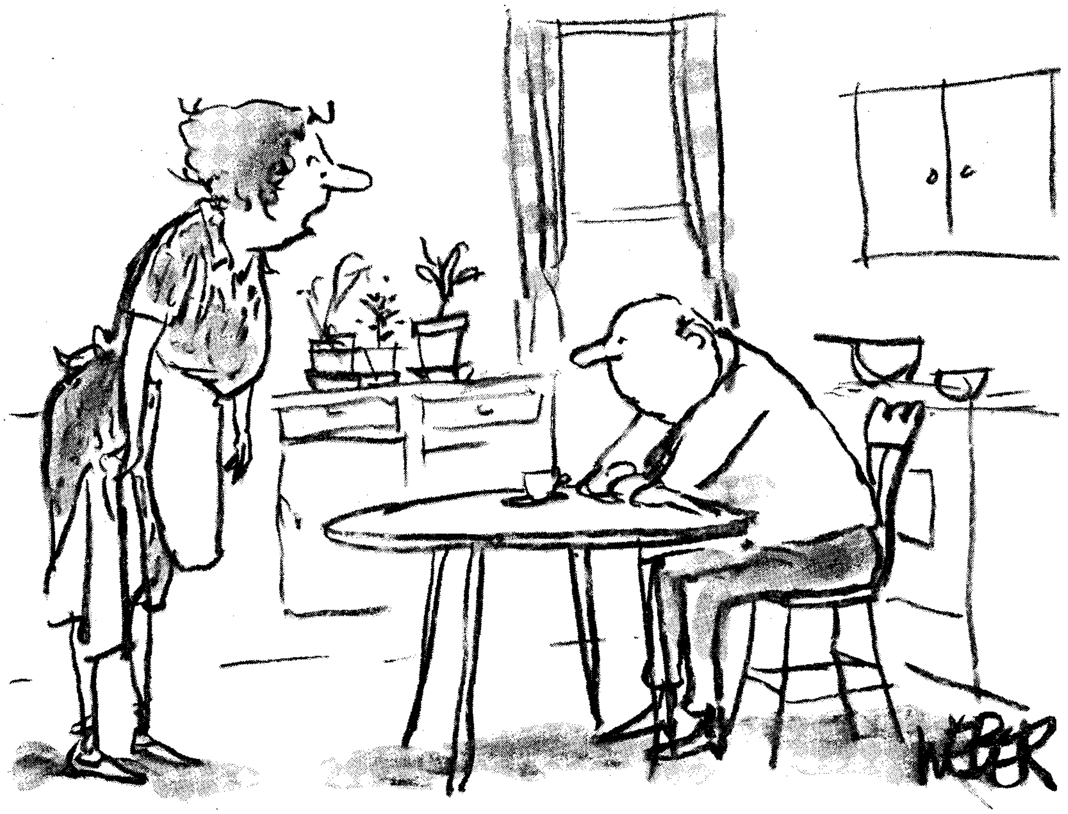
THE movie opens on a memorial plaque in the lobby of the San Francisco Hall of Justice, and we read the words "In Tribute to the Police Officers of San Francisco Who Gave Their Lives in the Line of Duty," and then the beginning of a list of names. This is a rather strange opening for "Dirty Harry," since it isn't about the death of a police officer. The tribute, however, puts the viewer in a respectful frame of mind; we all know that many police are losing their lives. The movie then proceeds to offer a magically simple culprit for their deaths: the liberals. Actually, the opening is strange for other reasons, too. I grew up in San Francisco, and one of the soundest pieces of folk wisdom my mother gave me was "If you're ever in trouble, don't go to the cops." I remember a high-school teacher telling me that it never ceased to amaze him that his worst students—the sadists and the bullies—landed not in jail but on the police force, though sometimes on the police force and then in jail. Even as children, San Franciscans were deeply aware of the corruption of the police—something totally ignored in this movie. "Dirty Harry" is not about the actual San Francisco police force; it's about a right-wing fantasy of that police force as a group helplessly emasculated by unrealistic liberals. The conceit of this movie is that for one brief, glorious period the police have a realist in their midst—and drive him out.

"Dirty Harry" is not one of those ambivalent, you-can-read-it-either-way jobs, like "The French Connection;" Inspector Harry Callahan is not a Popeye—porkpie-hatted and lewd and boorish. He's soft-spoken Clint Eastwood—six feet four of lean, tough saint, blue-eyed and shaggy-haired, with a rugged, creased, careworn face that occasionally breaks into a mischief-filled Shirley MacLaine grin. He's the best there is—a Camelot cop, courageous and incorruptible, and the protector of women and children. Or at least he would be, if the law allowed him to be. But the law coddles criminals; it gives them legal rights that cripple the police. And so the only way that Dirty Harry—the dedicated trouble-shooter who gets the dirtiest assignments—can protect the women and children of the city is to disobey orders.

As suspense craftsmanship, "Dirty Harry" is smooth and trim; based on an original screenplay by Harry Fink and his wife, R. M. Fink (formerly a TV writing team, now operating out of Switzerland), with some additional writing by Dean Riesner, it was directed in the sleekest style by the veteran urban-action director Don Siegel, and Lalo Schifrin's pulsating, jazzy electronic trickery drives the picture forward. Lalo Schifrin doesn't compose music—he works on you. It would be stupid to deny that "Dirty Harry" is a stunningly well-made genre piece, and it certainly turns an audience on. But turning on an audience is a function of motor excitation that is not identical with art (though there is an overlap); if it were, the greatest artists would be those who gave us heart attacks. Don Siegel is an accomplished exciter; once considered a liberal, he has now put his skills to work in a remarkably single-minded attack on liberal values, with each prejudicial detail in place. "Dirty Harry" is a kind of hardhat "The Fountainhead;" Callahan, a free individual, afraid of no one and bowing to no man, is pitted against a hippie maniac (loosely based on San Francisco's Zodiac Killer) who is a compendium of criminal types. The variety of his perversions is impressive—one might say that no depravity is foreign to him. He is pure evil: sniper, rapist, kidnapper, torturer, defiler of all human values. Paradisiacal San Francisco supports this vision. In New York, where crime is so obviously a social outgrowth, the dregs belong to the city, and a criminal could not be viewed as a snake in paradise. But, as everyone knows, the San Francisco light and the beauty of the natural setting transform and unify the architectural chaos; even poverty looks picturesque, as in other tourist traps, and crime can be treated as a defiler from outside the society. This criminal is not one for whom we need feel any responsibility or sympathy, yet he stands for everything the audience fears and loathes. And Harry cannot destroy this walking rot, because of the legal protections, such as the court rulings on



"I've given you the best years of my life—1938, 1951, and 1963, respectively."

Miranda and Escobedo, that a weak, liberal society gives its criminals. Those are the terms of the film. The dirtiness on Harry is the moral stain of recognition that evil must be dealt with; he is our martyr—stained on our behalf. The content fits the form, and beautifully—hand in glove. In the action genre, it's easier—and more fun—to treat crime in this medieval way, as evil, without specific causes or background. What produces a killer might be a subject for an artist, but it's a nuisance to an exciter, who doesn't want to slow the action down. When you're making a picture with Clint Eastwood, you naturally want things to be simple, and the basic contest between good and evil is as simple as you can get. It makes this genre piece more archetypal than most movies, more primitive and dreamlike; fascist medievalism has a fairy-tale appeal.

The movie was cheered and applauded by Puerto Ricans in the audience, and they jeered—as they were meant to—when the maniac whined and pleaded for his legal rights. Puerto Ricans could applaud Harry because in the movie laws protecting the rights of the accused are seen not as remedies for the mistreatment of the poor by the police and the courts but as protection for evil abstracted from all social conditions—metaphysical evil, classless criminality. The movie shrewdly makes the maniac smart, well-spoken, and white, and in order to clear Harry of any charge of prejudice or racism he is given a Mexican partner (Reni Santoni). The audience is led to identify totally with Harry and to feel victorious because the liberals don't succeed in stopping him. He saves us this time; he slaughters the maniac who has grabbed a busload of terrified children and is slapping them around. But Harry Callahan has to defy the mayor and the police department to do it. And, in a final gesture of contempt for the unrealistic legal system, Harry throws his badge into the same waters that the killer's corpse is floating in. Harry has dirtied himself for the last time; there is no one now to save us from evil, because the liberals are running the city.

The gesture at the end is a reprise of Gary Cooper's gesture at the end of "High Noon," but with a difference: in high-minded "High Noon," phony in its own way, Cooper, the marshal, singlehandedly cleaned up the outlaw gang and then threw his badge on the ground in contempt for the cowardice of the townspeople, who didn't live up to the principles of the law and wouldn't help

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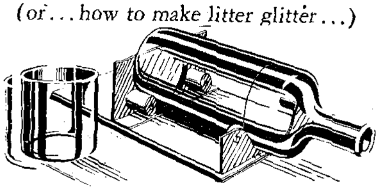

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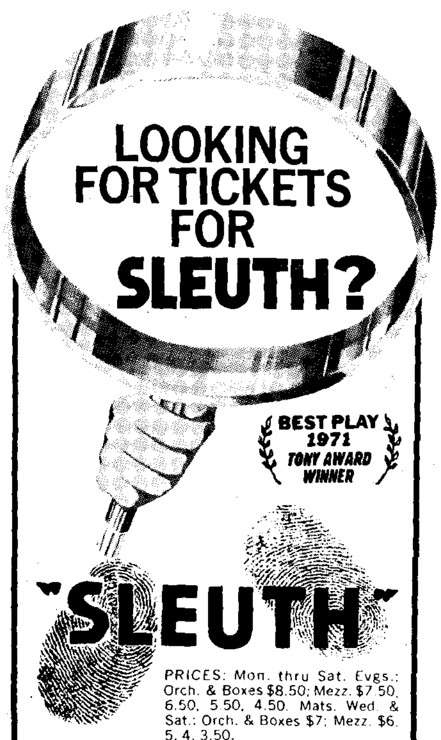
him defend it. "Dirty Harry" says that the laws were written by dupes who protect criminal rats and let women and children be tortured, and Eastwood throws his badge away because he doesn't respect the law; he stands for vigilante justice.

If you go along with the movie—and it's hard to resist, because the most skillful suspense techniques are used on very primitive emotional levels—you have but one desire: to see the maniac get it so it hurts. The movie lacks the zing and brute vitality of "The French Connection," but it has such sustained drive toward this righteous conclusion that it is an almost perfect piece of propaganda for para-legal police power. The evil monster represents urban violence, and the audience gets to see him kicked and knifed and shot, and finally triumphantly drowned. Violence has rarely been presented with such righteous relish.

At one point, Harry catches the mass murderer, but the police—in an implausible scene that really pushes its political point—decide they can't bring him to trial, because of legal technicalities, and so they blithely release him. Although they know he has already killed several people, they don't even bother to put a tail on him. And whom do they consult before releasing him? A Berkeley law professor, of course. Such a perfect touch for the audience. Anyone who knows San Francisco knows that in the highly unlikely circumstance that a law professor were to be consulted, he would be from the University of San Francisco, a Catholic institution closer in location and nearer in heart to the S. F. Police Department—or, if not from there, from Hastings College of the Law, a branch of the University of California that is situated in San Francisco. But Berkeley has push-button appeal as the red center of bleeding-heart liberalism; it has replaced Harvard as the joke butt and unifying hatred of reactionaries. The movie is just as astute in what it leaves out: in his guise as sniper, the many-sided evil one has an impressive arsenal that includes a high-powered rifle and a machine gun. But the movie raises no question about how he was able to purchase these weapons. There is one virtuoso plot development: the maniac arranges to get himself beaten to a garish pulp, so that he can scream police brutality and pin the blame on Callahan. The San Francisco police, with their unenviable record of free-style use of the billy, should contribute to a memorial plaque for "Dirty Harry."



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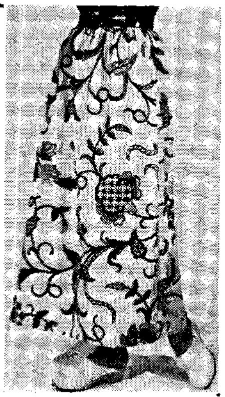

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On the way out, a pink-cheeked little girl was saying "That was a *good* picture" to her father. Of course; the dragon had been slain. "Dirty Harry" is obviously just a genre movie, but this action genre has always had a fascist potential, and it has finally surfaced. If crime were caused by super-evil dragons, there would be no Miranda, no Escobedo; we could all be licensed to kill, like Dirty Harry. But since crime is caused by deprivation, misery, psychopathology, and social injustice, "Dirty Harry" is a deeply immoral movie.

To excite an audience, you don't really need to believe in anything but manipulative skills—and success. If you're intelligent and work this way, you become a cynic; if you're not very intelligent, you can point with pride to the millions of people buying tickets.

"DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER" starts with a full head of steam, and one expects a luxuriant, mock-sadistic good time. But a few minutes later Sean Connery, as Bond, and a villain are in a tiny elevator, lunging at each other and pounding each other with excruciatingly amplified blows; the sequence goes on and on, and the movie loses its insolent cool. The Bond pictures depend on the comic pornography of brutality; the violence has to be witty. When people are just slugging each other, as in any movie fight, the point of the picture is blunted. This movie never recovers for long. The script (by Richard Maibaum and Tom Mankiewicz) involves diamond smuggling and old Blofeld; it's a wilted affair with deep-in-the-closet bitch-fag villains. The one new character with possibilities, a billionaire Las Vegas recluse modelled on Howard Hughes, is dimly written, and played—shall we say rustically?—by Jimmy Dean. (He acts as if someone had just suggested to him that he turn actor but hadn't told him how.) The picture isn't bad; it's merely tired, and it's often noisy when it means to be exciting. Guy Hamilton directs more or less adequately, but he isn't precise enough for nonchalance—for the right, perfectly careless throwaway-joke tone. Hamilton doesn't quite parody urbanity and flippancy, because he's still struggling to achieve them. The Ken Adam sets just sit there, and the film doesn't have anything like those flamboyant sequences in the snow—the ski chase and the bobsled run—that were quite literally dazzling in "On Her Majesty's Secret Service." What's missing may be linked to the absence of Peter Hunt, who

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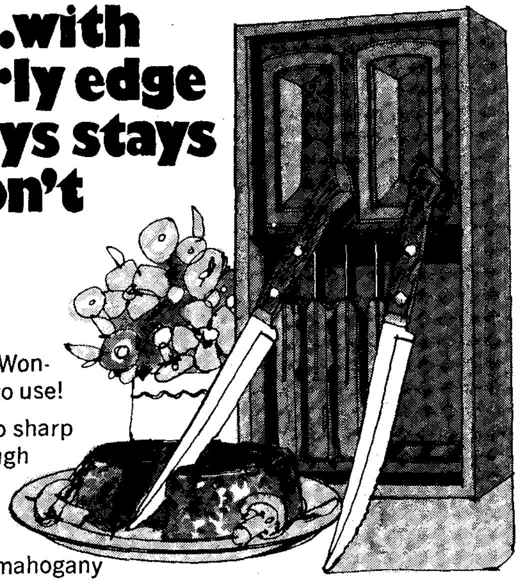

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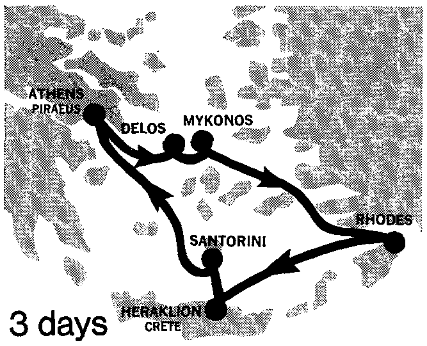

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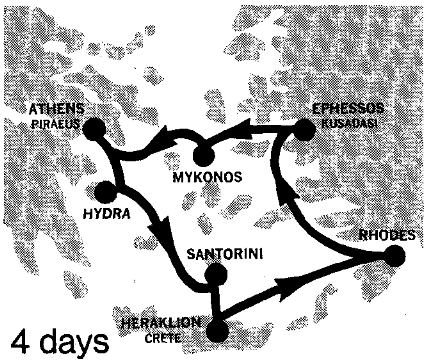

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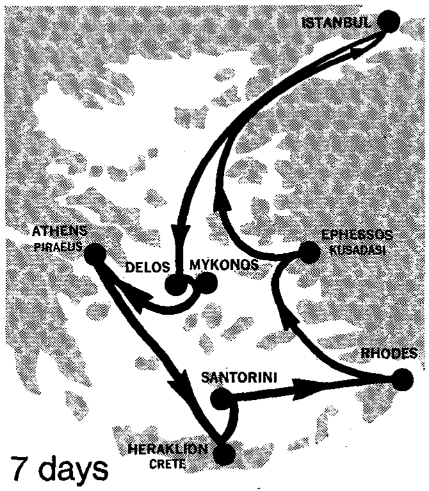

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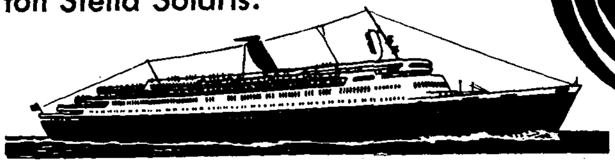

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worked on the action sequences of all the earlier Bonds, and who directed the last one; perhaps it was he who gave the series its distinctive quality of aestheticized thrills. The daring seemed *beautiful* in the earlier films—precariousness glorified. This time, even when a sequence works (that is, is both daring and funny), such as the car chase, and the battle between Connery and the black and white Amazons, it lacks elegance and visual opulence; it looks like sequences of the same kind in the Bond imitations. No doubt those of us who love the Bond pictures are spoiled, but really we've come to expect more than a comic car chase.

Customers may, however, be happy enough with what they get. "Diamonds Are Forever" has opened just at the moment when people long for a familiar, stable, unalienated hero with a capacity for enjoyment; the timing could not be better for Sean Connery to come back as Bond. He no longer wears the waxy deadpan of a sex-fantasy stud dummy; over the years he has turned the robot matinée-idol Bond into a man—himself. The foppery and the gadgetry have diminished, and the sexual conquests, too. Almost imperceptibly, Bond has lost his upper-class snobbery along with the toiletries; it's as if that snotty, enigmatic Bond disgusted Connery. His instinct was right: it's better this way, because Connery's mock-heroic presence incarnates the appeal of the series without need of the commodity accoutrements of a modern pasha—without need even of a harem. Bond doesn't seem a phony anymore.

—PAULINE KAEL

•

Governor Ronald Reagan said Reinecke had phoned word of his decision to him while the governor was in New York Tuesday.

"He called me in New York about this and told me he felt he just had to convene the commission even though the Legislature was going ahead just in the event that if the decision should be that the commission does have the responsibility that he wouldn't be starting cold and from way behind."—*San Francisco Chronicle.*

He *did*?

•

Ocean-floor core samples taken by the research vessel Glomar Challenger show that recently formed sediments and rocks lie underneath say the two continents are moving together, pling.

—*Washington Sunday Star.*

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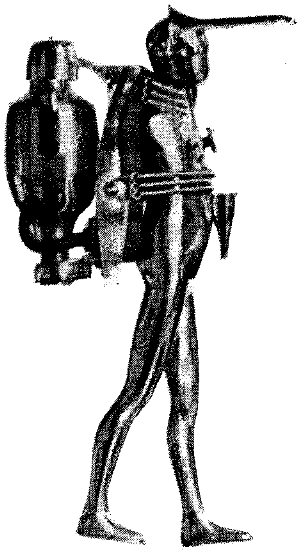

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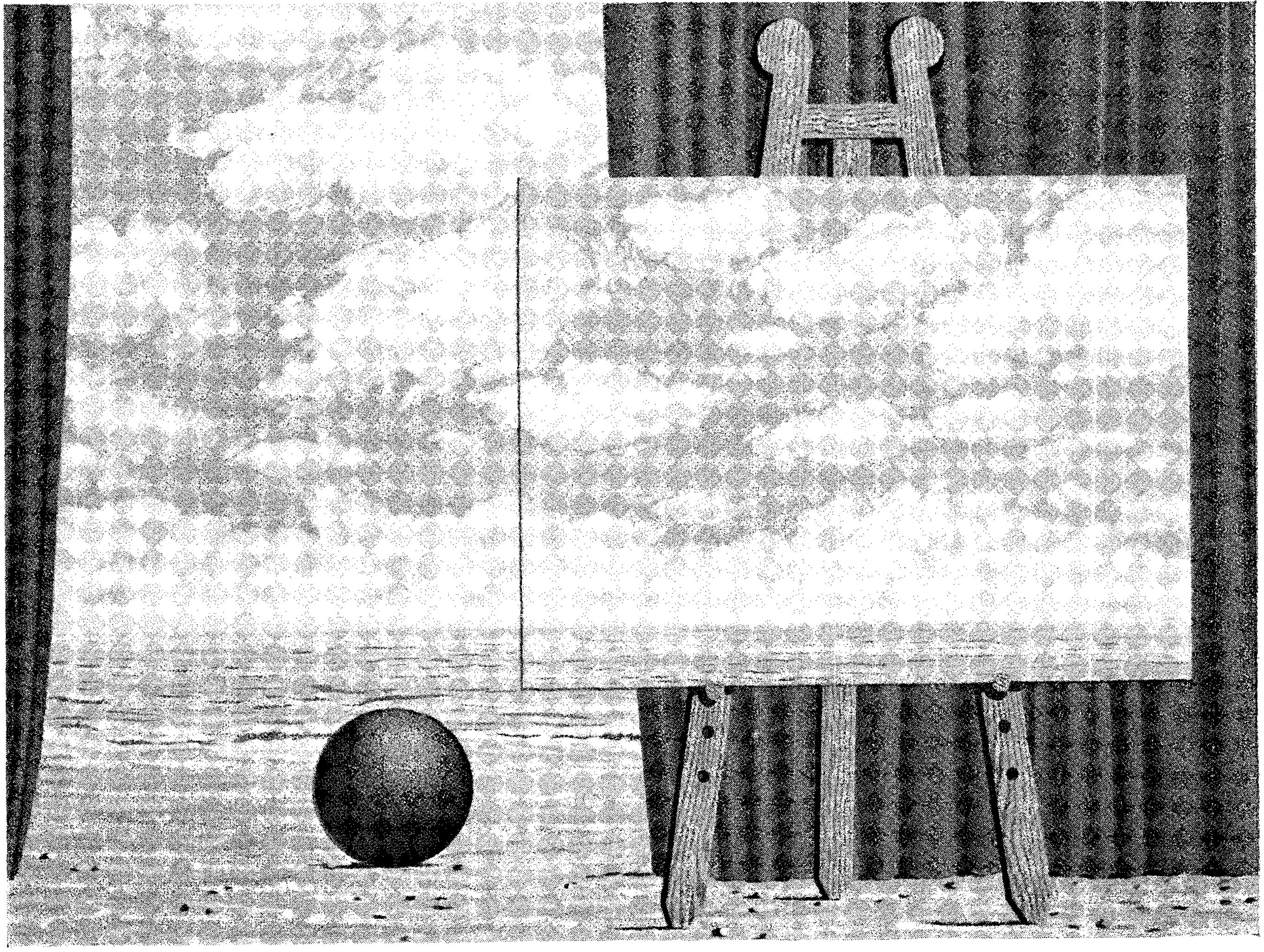
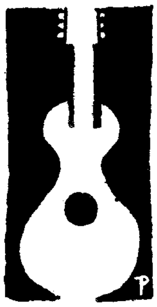


MUSICAL EVENTS

Between Rhapsody and Autopsy



FOLLOWING a sensitive performance of Mozart's Symphony No. 29, K. 201, with the Philadelphia Orchestra in Philharmonic Hall last Tuesday night, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski embarked on Bruckner's Ninth Symphony. I have always regarded this as one of the greatest symphonies ever written, but Mr. Skrowaczewski's interpretation of it made it sound remarkably ineffective. The first movement showed unsteadiness of tempo as well as all sorts of precious conceits where emphasis was concerned. The Scherzo went better. But the tremendous Adagio resembled something between a rhapsody and an autopsy. I suspect that Mr. Skrowaczewski's idea was to dramatize the movement, but all he succeeded in doing was to tear it apart, fussily exhibit various episodes as if they did not constitute parts of the whole, and introduce "improvements" in the score. Each of the two notes that form the beginning of the initial theme, for example, was played with two bow strokes in the violins, and the bow strokes were unanimous in rhythm, completely destroying the phraseology of the passage. This same theme was played at a wearisome pace. Later, Mr. Skrowaczewski speeded things up for no apparent reason, and throughout the movement you would have thought that he was conducting a Chopin fantasia, so wide were the variations in tempo. This is not the way to conduct Bruckner, and I advise Mr. Skrowaczewski to consult the authoritative interpretations of some of his elders in order to arrive at a decent conception of the work. In fact, this was the sort of performance that makes people avoid Bruckner's symphonies on the ground that they are tedious. Tedious it was indeed.

THE American Ballet Theatre opened a season at the City Center on Tuesday night. I was unable to attend the opening, since I was at Philharmonic Hall, but I caught the programs of the following two nights. Wednesday night started with "Paquita," a Petipa ballet staged by Marika Besobrasova, with music by Minkus, orchestrated by John Lanchbery. "Paquita" did not succeed in raising my blood pressure. There were a couple of nice passages by Eleanor D'Antuono and Ivan Nagy, but this ballet is basically a trifle; the music is some of the least inspired that Minkus ever wrote (which is saying a great deal), and some of the work of the corps de ballet was inexact and apparently underrehearsed. It was good to see Agnes de Mille's "Rodeo" revived as the next number. I have seen more brilliant performances of it, but it is an authentic piece of Americana, and its tomboy-finally-turned-feminine heroine is a touching character. Aaron Copland's excellent score is wholly appropriate, expressing something about the loneliness and enormous expanse of the Great Plains and about the folk dancing that was until recently almost the only diversion of their inhabitants, apart from gambling. Miss de Mille deserves a special place in the ballet repertoire, if only because hers is practically the only kind of ballet that has deep American roots. Among the cast, Christine Sarry made a perky Cowgirl, while Terry Orr and Marcos Paredes were at least acceptable as the Champion Roper and the Head Wrangler, respectively.

Then came Rudolf Nureyev's reworking of Petipa's pas de deux from "Le Corsair," with Natalia Makarova and John Prinz as the participants. Miss Makarova was absolutely scintillating, with a precision of line and a sureness of technique that are found only among the elect. Mr. Prinz was not quite as impressive. His dancing lacked the tigerish quality appropriate to the Corsair; it was simply not vigorous enough. The final number that night was a work of some length called "The River," choreographed by Alvin Ailey to music by Duke Ellington. The costumes, by Frank Thompson, were pale-blue leotards, topless for the men, and Nicholas Cernovitch's lighting gave them an iridescent look from time to time. The ballet was divided into episodes—"Spring," "Meander," "Lake," "Vortex," "Falls," and so on. "The River" is obviously designed for a black cast, but the predominantly white one managed it well—particularly Dennis Nahat, who seemed wonderfully attuned to the black dance idiom in a movement called "Riba (Mainstream)." Elsewhere, striking performances were turned in by Keith Lee, Mimi Paul, William Carter, Ian Horvath, Cynthia Gregory, Gayle Young, Zhandra Rodriguez, Michael Smuin, and Sallie Wilson. "The River" is a modern ballet showing influences of Martha Graham and others. I recommend it. It is an entirely pleasant work, in which the Ellington underpinning is varied—sometimes jazz, sometimes not. The main conductor of the evening was Akira Endo, a Japanese, with David Gilbert presiding over the "Paquita" score. Both seemed to be able maestros.

Thursday night began with Balanchine's "Theme and Variations" (music by Tchaikovsky)—something that is in the repertory of both this company and the New York City Ballet. This time, the work of the corps de ballet was as precise as one could wish, and all the participants went through their symmetrical patterns with fine style. The principals were Miss D'Antuono and Mr. Prinz, and here Mr. Prinz seemed to be more in his element. Unfortunately, because of illness, what was expected to be the most exciting event of the evening—a pas de deux from Bournonville's "Flower Festival at Genzano," danced by Carla Fracci and Erik Bruhn—had to be cancelled. So the next number was the première of something called "Theatre," choreographed by Eliot Feld to Richard Strauss's Burlesque for Piano and Orchestra, in which the piano part was quite well performed by Howard Barr. This Strauss score is so engaging that almost anything choreographed to it is sure to make an effect. I doubt whether the Feld choreography would be notable in any other musical connection. The work is a Pierrot-Arlecchino-Colombina commedia-dell'arte spectacle, with magnificent costumes by Frank Thompson. As a theatre piece it is amusing. As a ballet it is a bit thin, consisting mainly of pantomime between a woebegone Pierrot (Mr. Feld), a worldly and clever Arlecchino (Terry Orr), and an omniflirtatious Colombina (Christine Sarry). I was unable to make out the significance of the role of the hunchbacked Pulcinello, but the roles of four thieves were obvious enough, and most of the dancing proper was done by the corps de ballet (here referred to as Innamorate), whose work was at least praiseworthy and whose costumes were enchanting. The evening ended with the familiar Jerome Robbins-Leonard Bernstein-Oliver Smith "Fancy Free," in which the principal dancers were Mr. Horvath, Mr. Smuin, Mr. Orr, Ellen Everett, Karena Brock, and Rhodie Jorgenson. The conductor for all the ballets that night was Mr. Endo.

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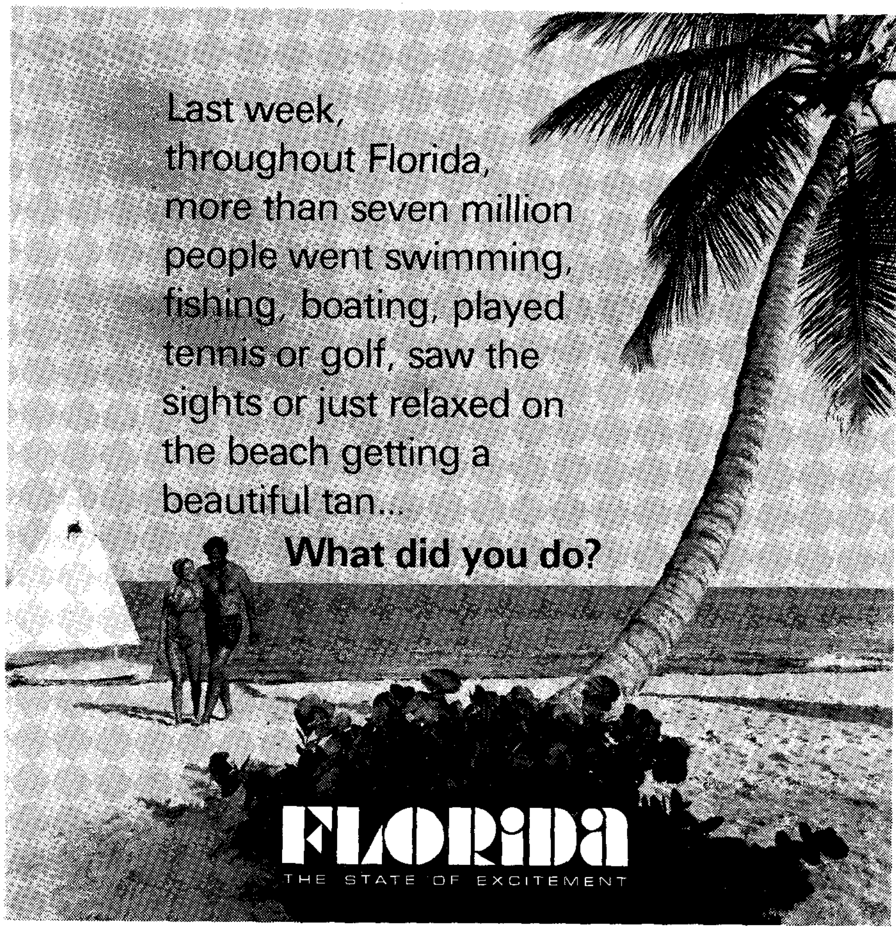
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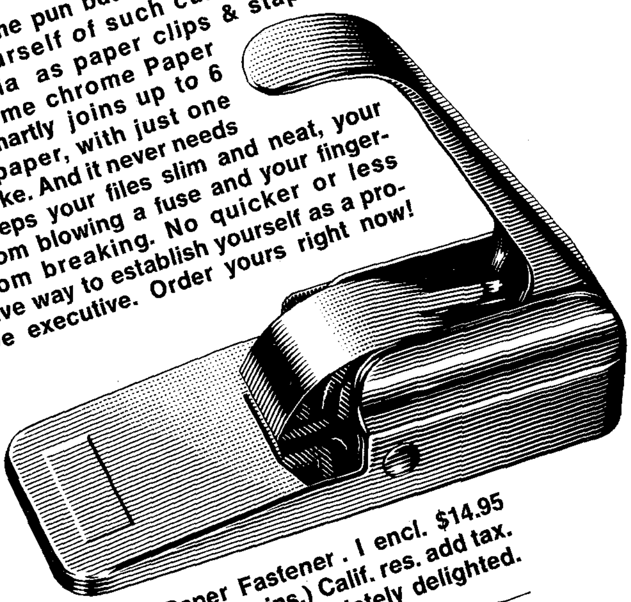

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few performances each season and, as far as I can make out, playing to good-sized audiences. Being somewhat curious about it, I made my way to that geographically baffling borough last Friday night to witness a production of "The Barber of Seville" in the Bronx High School of Science Auditorium. One thing I must get off my chest at the outset. The auditorium has no orchestra pit, and looking at the stage over the blinding lights on the orchestra's music stands is a hazard to the eyes. There should be some way to shade these lights, including the one on the conductor's stand. But, peering over them with a program held up to cut them off as much as possible, I did witness a pretty good performance—a student performance, to be sure (many of the participants were from the Juilliard School), but one in which a good deal of imagination compensated for some rather rudimentary sets and props. The imagination was that of Carol Kastendieck, the director, and there were many nice touches—Dr. Bartolo's servant lying drunk in the town square during the first act, the ceremonious winding and unwinding of Dr. Bartolo's scarf, Figaro making his first appearance in a window in his barbershop, and so forth. The young singers were generally quite able. Count Almaviva was sung by Jonathan Rigg, who has all the requisite agility for the role. Lenus Carlson made a commanding Figaro, though *his* agility left something to be desired. Willard White was, I thought, slightly miscast as Dr. Bartolo; his voice is actually too good for the role. He is a noble Sarastro in "The Magic Flute" (as he was in a recent Juilliard production), but he is not a *basso buffo*, and a *basso buffo* is required here. Barbara Martin, as Rosina, showed a very promising mezzo-soprano voice and took all her *fioritura* without a flaw. John Seabury was a perfect Don Basilio, and the rest of the cast was at least adequate. The conductor was Michael Spierman. He proceeded earnestly, but nowhere did he succeed in giving the score the appropriate glitter. Part of the trouble was that his tempos were far too slow, while his orchestra's tone was soggy. More unanimity of intonation in the strings would have helped.

—WINTHROP SARGEANT

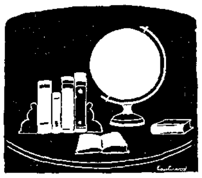
•

Mrs. Laura Dahlberg is as sprightly and more alive than some people twice her age. She celebrated her 100th birthday yesterday.—*Staten Island Advance.*

And you're not mentioning any names?

BOOKS

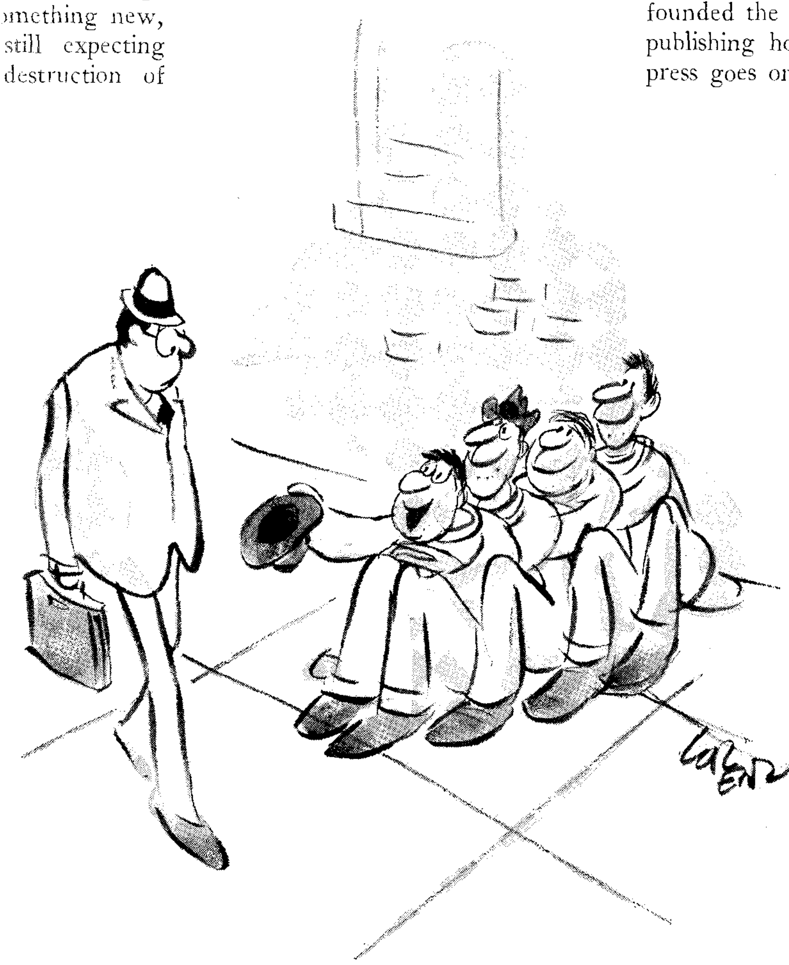
Lost Continent



IN his memoirs, "Gesichter und Zeiten," published in 1935, two years before his death, the German Count Harry Kessler, who was born in 1868, looked back to the eighties and recalled a widespread feeling that

> something very great, the old cosmopolitan, still mainly agricultural and feudal Europe, the world of beautiful ladies, gallant kings, dynastic arrangements, the Europe of the eighteenth century and the Holy Alliance, had become old and sick, and was declining to its death; and something new, young, strong, as yet unimaginable, would make its appearance.

The Count's diaries for the years 1918 through 1937, which have now been translated by Charles Kessler (no relation) and published by Holt, Rinehart & Winston under the title "In the Twenties," record the fulfillment of that apprehension. They open in Berlin a few days before the Kaiser's abdication, and close just before Kessler died, an exile in Paris, unable to recognize Nazism as that "something new, young, strong," and still expecting at any moment the destruction of the "ramshackle Hitler structure." Kessler's tragedy—seeing the dreams of his youth realized as the nightmares of his old age—has become commonplace in our unfortunate (or perhaps too hopeful) century, but Kessler was far from commonplace, not only because of who he was but because of how he wrote. His diaries are irresistible. Everybody, every place, every event is alive to the reader: one not only reads conversations but hears voices: Pauline Strauss (the composer's wife), snobbish, silly, and quarrelsome; Jean Cocteau, at once earnest and malicious; Eric Gill, earnest and exhibitionistic; Isadora Duncan, bragging and flirting in French with a California accent; Spengler, as a lecturer, achieving the consummate dullness that is so often produced by the wish to be brilliantly original. The passage of time changes some people. Pilsudski undergoes an "odd metamorphosis," adopting the manner of a head of state when he becomes one, while madness makes Nijinsky's face truly unrecognizable. Other people never change at all. Einstein is always the same, and, to Kessler, always attractive. Lloyd George is always theatrical: in 1922, at the Genoa Conference, as British Prime Minister, he is "a superb player" whose speech is the "star attraction;" in opposition, in Parliament in 1925, he is "an actor too old for his heroics." Kessler himself can change his mind, sometimes quickly. As a supporter of the Weimar Republic, he is horrified in 1925 by Hindenburg's election to the Presidency; a few weeks later, he is persuaded to hope that the General's leadership will, after all, strengthen the Republic; three days after that, tea-party talk in the house of Frau Foerster-Nietzsche, the philosopher's sister, turns to the election, and Kessler is despondent again ("Farewell progress, farewell vision of a new world").



"How about it, pal? Help send a bobsled team to the Winter Olympics."

Yet in essentials Kessler did not change much; he was always eager, active, inquiring, absorbed, or wishing to be absorbed. He was, besides, rich, handsome, and clever. His family connections ranged from Parnell, on his Anglo-Irish mother's side, to the German Chancellor Prince Bernhard von Bülow, on his German father's; his sister married a French nobleman. Kessler was well educated in France, England, and Germany, well travelled both as art lover and as professional diplomat. (Though he left the German Foreign Service in the nineteen-twenties, he kept on lending it an unofficial hand abroad.) In this book, Kessler also ranges from Tilsit to Birmingham to lecture for pacifism. He is a guest of princes, a host to radicals, a sounding board for German, French, and English politicians, and a patron of and worker in the arts. Before the First World War, he had written the scenario of a ballet, "The Legend of Joseph," for Diaghilev's company, and had founded the Cranach Press, a fine-arts publishing house. The business of the press goes on throughout this volume: Kessler chivying or charming Maillol, Edward Gordon Craig, V. Sackville-West, Hauptmann, Gide, and others for contributions; Kessler serving as a graphic-arts judge, or winning prizes, at the Leipzig Book Fair. He made for himself the leisure to write a biography of Walter Rathenau, the German Foreign Minister who was assassinated by right-wing delinquents in 1922, and down to the time when he realized he would have to flee Germany, he worked on a play for Max Reinhardt; in exile, he wrote his memoirs, hoped, sickened, and died. Through Kessler, the reader begins to feel what a liberal-minded German could feel about public affairs during the Weimar years; namely, every variety of uncertainty and unhappiness. Kessler detested the Hohenzollerns but had little time to rejoice at their disappearance; the German revolution of 1918, if it was a real revolution (Kessler could not make up his mind), seems not to have had a "bliss-was-it-in-that-dawn-to-be-alive" moment, partly because Germany was in shock over its military collapse and partly because the pressure of the victors distorted or confused German politics. And then Kessler was unprepared for the intense Allied hatred of Germany. He first saw it through Rathenau:

> He had been receiving visits from dozens of British and Americans who want to see him personally but are unanimous in their attitude of condolence that he should belong to a nation which they regard with a mixture of loathing and contempt unique in history. Their behavior is the same as Christians adopt toward outstanding Jews whom they accept but pity because of their awful Jewish connections. As a Jew . . . what seems harsh to him is that, having had to put up with this all his life, he is called on to endure it a second time as a German.

That loathing and contempt were embodied in the war-guilt clause of the Versailles Treaty. In recent years, it has read like nonsense, but because of its effect on Kessler one sees that it was really cruelty. For Kessler, with all his entrées, had always assumed he knew what was going on, but he had never picked up any information to suggest that Germany, alone among the great powers, had wanted the war, and so the Allies' stunning accusation set him anxiously interviewing everybody he thought might know, asking whether there was any truth at all in that idea, and trying to find out whether he himself, who was well aware of his government's and its Army's failings, could have been more misled, more betrayed than he knew. He asked, among others, Richard von Kühlmann, the diplomat now remembered as the German who negotiated and debated with Trotsky at Brest-Litovsk. Kühlmann told Kessler that he thought Germany and Russia were both to blame in 1914, but then honestly and unhelpfully added that he had "never been able to unravel exactly *who* at Berlin wanted war;" nine years later, in 1929, Kessler was not relieved when Harold Nicolson assured him that the Kaiser had not wanted war but von Bülow had. Nobody—insider, outsider, bystander, or mere opiner—ever ended Kessler's miserable uncertainty about the extent to which the German people had been betrayed

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into the First World War; the uncertainty merely lessened as he became distracted and enraged by the rise of the Nazis. All the gossip he unearthed over a decade confirmed what has since become the general impression: that none of the political leaders of 1914 wanted the war they got. This was not yet obvious in the twenties, since statesmen then, like statesmen now, never asked to be forgiven on the ground that they did not know what they were doing; instead, as the years went by, they all published memoirs blaming somebody else.

Besides interrogating the past, Kessler and everyone he knew were trying to make sense of the present and to discern which among the novel systems of the age was the something new that would replace the old agricultural and feudal order. Unfortunately, no matter how hard they searched, they found few—and no new—ideas about or examples of a just organization of industrial society. Kessler remarks that some of Rathenau's ideas recall English Guild Socialism; they also recall American Progressivism of the Theodore Roosevelt vintage. When he was young, Kessler had read Marx (along with Edward Bellamy and Nietzsche), but he was unimpressed when Rathenau told him that Bolshevism was "a splendid system" and predicted that "a century hence Bolshevism will rule the globe." Rathenau, by the way, believed that only the English, or just possibly the Americans, could make Bolshevism work. "The current Russian version," he commented, "is like a magnificent play performed as melodrama by third-rate actors." The war had turned Kessler against violence; he knew that the murdered Spartacist leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were disinterested and high-minded, but he could not accept their violent policies or those of their successors, the German Communists. Even so, he later wondered—though only for an hour—if he had been too harsh about Mussolini, for in the meantime German Social Democracy had seemed to lack spirit, and while Kessler disliked old-fashioned capitalism, he was doubtful, too, about the generous paternal capitalism that the Cadbury-chocolate people had established in their factory in England; he thought it retained "an element of workers' exploitation." Yet politically he remained rather open-minded, except when he encountered the German right or the Nazis; it never crossed his mind that the German society woman who told him in 1932 that she found the "ca-

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maraderie" among all classes in the Nazi youth movement "wonderful" was responding, though mistakenly, to a vision of new ideals.

I suppose that what Kessler lived through can touch us now because we Americans have since lived through analogous disappointments. His sense of having been betrayed by his own government was paralleled by the feelings of Americans who believed that our government betrayed our interests to Russia or to Communism during the Second World War, and it is shared again today by Americans who think they have been betrayed by their government in the Vietnam war. We, of course, have not yet seen anything like the political savagery of the last years of the Weimar Republic—the street battles and gang wars between Nazis and Communists that evoke from Kessler passages of hopelessness about the future of German government:

> The country is coming apart. . . . The struggles between the radical movements (Communists and Nazis) have much more affinity with the wars of religion during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries . . . than they have with the political struggles belonging to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They are bitter armed disputes between two ideologies which exclude compromise, whereas in the case of political struggles, compromise is the objective.

They also evoke passages of despair about the nature of the German people:

> I have . . . come to recognize two characteristics as being absolutely and inalterably basic to all Germans, but especially the younger generation, whether they belong to left or right . . . escape into metaphysics, into some sort of "faith," and the desire for discipline. . . . The German . . . is through and through a militarist and through and through an escapist into some kind of beyond or Utopia, and the awful part is that he mixes them together!

Throughout these nineteen years, all the real gladness Kessler knows comes from the arts—planning his Cranach Press books, hearing the boy Menuhin play. Jammed right in among the entries relating all the unbearable political events are Kessler's responses to or descriptions of a knockout book, a striking new building, a new opera, a top-notch performance. It is amazing, or maybe just puzzling, to realize that in modern times achievements in the arts have been so far superior to achievements in politics. Even those artistic figures in Kessler's diaries who are a little out of fashion now—I think, for example, of Paul Valéry—are higher, or at least clearer, in our recollection than such once-important figures as Sir

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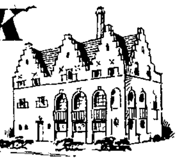

John Simon, Chicherin, Brüning, Barthou, Snowden; all the artists who pleased or impressed Kessler—Brecht, Satie, Woolf—have kept or increased their audiences, while almost all the politicians' constituencies, professional historians excepted, have shrunk to nothing. Is it possible that as a species we human beings are by nature more aesthetic than practical, more gifted with sensibility than with sense? Kessler's engrossing diaries, though they never precisely ask that question, plainly suggest its answer.

—NAOMI BLIVEN

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

NATALIE NATALIA, by Nicholas Mosley (Coward, McCann & Geoghegan). A terribly ambitious novel—interesting but unsuccessful—about an English politician named Anthony Greville, who is disillusioned with his profession ("an orgy where lust for power is exorcised discreetly") and bedevilled by his mistress, the alternately malevolent and benign Natalie/Natalia. "In a dark wood, at the middle time of life," Greville embarks on a trip that seems to be modelled on the one taken by Dante. He encounters a series of lost souls in England (Inferno); then goes to Africa, where he has a nervous breakdown and ecstatically climbs a mountain (Purgatory); and finally returns, renewed, to England (Paradise). In place of Dante's religion the author has a sketchy world view of his own—a kind of paganism—but this world view enters the story only in brief flashes, seeming forced and preposterous. Hoping for greatness, the author appears to have misjudged his very considerable talents. They essentially lie in irony—in leaving things unstated. This book is much too blatant.

GENERAL

STALIN: THE HISTORY OF A DICTATOR, by H. Montgomery Hyde (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). No biography is going to make Stalin look good, but this one, well written and well thought out, helps make him comprehensible. For example, some part of his brutality and coarseness was evidently the effect of his coming from the bottom of society, brought up by brutal, coarse people, such as his violent, alcoholic father. Many of the Old Bolsheviks were middle-class boys—rebellious young

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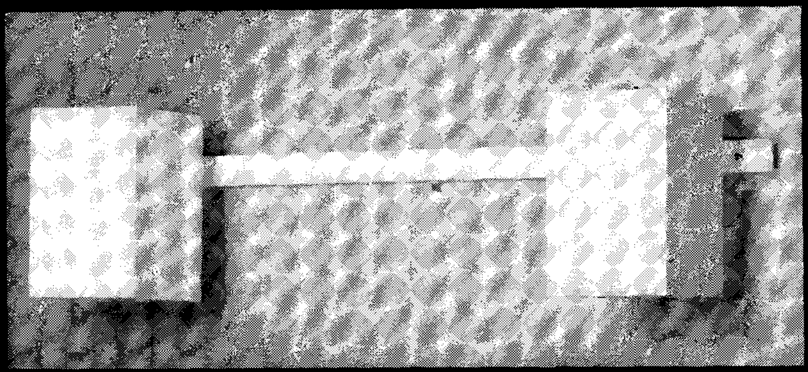

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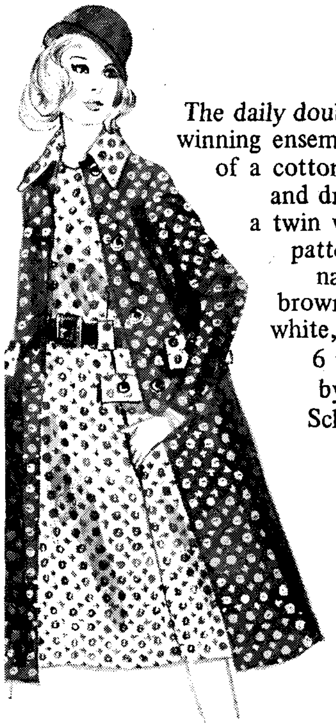

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intellectuals who became slightly priggish men—and they frequently snubbed Stalin and failed to recognize how intelligent he was, because he was less verbal than they as well as less mannerly. Mr. Hyde finds, however, that Lenin respected him, relied on his dogged effectiveness, and was slow in coming to distrust him. Mr. Hyde discusses as much Marxist sectarianism as is necessary for his story, but his emphasis is always on his subject, a youth who had trouble expressing affection and a man who seemed to have lost the capacity to feel any. Yet visitors, reporters, and colleagues are all on record testifying to Stalin's ability to please and to charm as well as to overawe or finagle. How to account for his unparalleled crimes? Mr. Hyde suggests that by the nineteen-thirties Stalin had come to identify the preservation of the Soviet system with the maintenance of his own absolute power. It is a persuasive solution to the puzzle of so much wickedness.

THE BLIND HORN'S HATE, by Richard Hough (Norton). Tierra del Fuego, the near-antarctic tip of South America, is a cold, wet, gale-swept land of rock, coarse grass, and tangled forests of larch and beech, whose aboriginal Indian inhabitants impressed Darwin, on his visit aboard the Beagle, as "the most abject and miserable creatures I anywhere beheld . . . one can hardly make oneself believe that they are fellow creatures." The recorded history of this forbidding archipelago, which opened with the discovery by Magellan of the treacherous strait that bears his name, is the subject of Mr. Hough's fine book. It is a history of varying but unrelieved disaster—shipwreck, mutiny, scurvy, starvation, privation, murder, assassination, genocide, suicide—and it is unrelievedly absorbing. Illustrated and with many maps.

LEGACY OF GLORY, by Michael Glover (Scribners). In 1808, Napoleon decided to settle the matter of the troublesome Spaniards once and for all. After dethroning the silly King Charles IV and his equally silly son, Ferdinand VII, he offered the Spanish crown to his elder brother, Joseph. Joseph, a prosperous businessman who was by that time King of Naples and quite happy in that sinecure, reluctantly accepted, was escorted into Madrid by a French army, and installed in the palace of the Bourbon kings. The Spanish business, Napoleon thought, was finished. This book spells out the many—many and costly—ways in which Napoleon was wrong. It tells of the years of the Peninsular War, which saw the emergence of the guerrilla; of the rise of Wellington as a great captain and as a nemesis; of the phenomenon of the Spanish armies, which were soundly trounced time and again, but which, somehow, always regrouped and were ready to fight again; and of the losses sustained by Napoleon, which were far more, Frenchman for Frenchman, than those accounted for in the entire campaign in Russia. In addition, the book is a tragi-farce centering on the ambivalent relationship of King Joseph ("Joey Bottles," the Spaniards called him) and his little brother, which is one long chronicle of humiliation piled on humiliation. A very diverting and instructive tale, and very well told.

DOSTOEVSKY: WORKS AND DAYS, by Avrahm Yarmolinsky (Funk & Wagnalls). This expanded edition of an earlier biography has been enriched by new material recently released by Soviet authorities. Mr. Yarmolinsky's portrait of the literary genius—an epileptoid spendthrift, a man with an irritable nature and a loving heart—is gripping, and plausible, too, for the author is fair in his assessments of figures who made Dostoevsky unhappy, and of those whom he made unhappy. The book is also good at presenting the Russian background—nineteenth-century Russian politics, culture, and everyday life—which is for Western readers an exotic combination of the generosity and brutality, the crudity and cultivation that are reflected in Dostoevsky's writing.

•

LODI, Italy (AP)—Sophia Loren says at heart she is a typical Neapolitan girl—namely, a good cook. To prove her point, the actress has written a book on cooking called "In the Kitchen With Love."

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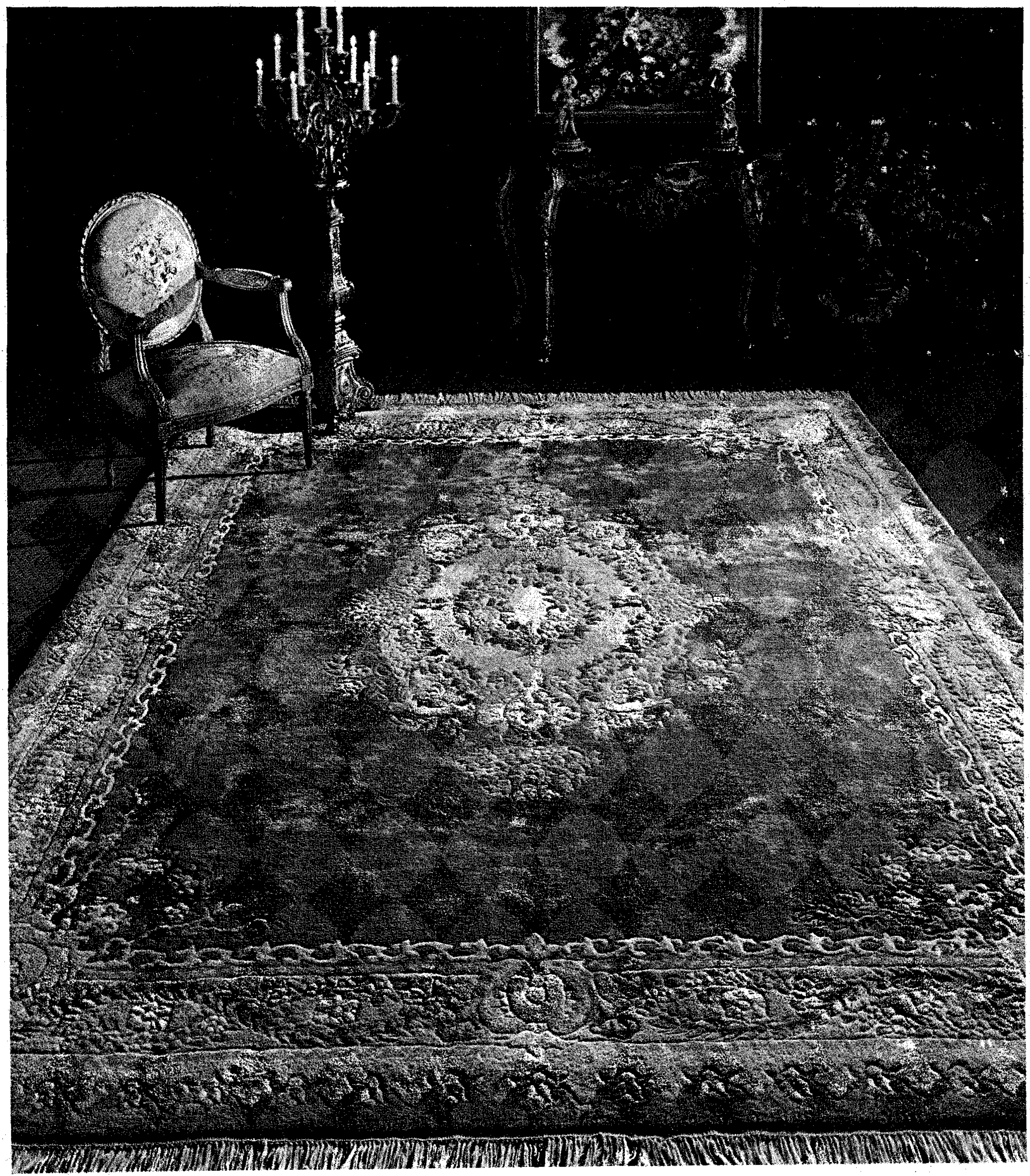

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